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Champion
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Mayor joins in Lions' Christmas party fun

Charity's fashion show fundraiser

Becky Latham who has been chosen to represent Girlguiding North West England on a project in Romania.

Guide leader Becky selected to head up project to support disadvantaged teens in Romania

A LEADER with a local Girl Guides group has been selected to represent Girlguiding North West England in an important social action project in Europe.

Becky Latham, 20, a leader from the 3rd Burscough Guide Unit will be joining two other chosen leaders to take a team of 12 Girl Guides aged 14 to 18, on a trip to Romania to take part in an agricultural project, which aims to provide shelter and support to disadvantaged teenagers.

The group will work alongside young people at micro-eco farms and will help teach English to the local communities.

Becky, who lives in Ormskirk, said: " Girlguiding has been such a major factor in my life. It has given me so many opportunities and I have made so many friends. I'm most looking forward to getting to work as a team to help form relationships within Romania."

Julie Bell, regional Chief Commissioner for Girlguiding North West England, said: "It's really fantastic to see so many of our members putting themselves forward for these international projects. Being part of Girlguiding gives you so many opportunities, including these incredible international adventures."

DEMAND TO CUT 'NOT-SO-SPECIAL' ALLOWANCES

Independents say too many county councillors receive extras on top of basic £10,000 per annum

AN independent borough councillor has called for Lancashire County Council to drastically reduce the number of councillors receiving special responsibility allowances.

Councillor Adrian Owens, Our West Lancashire representative for Ormskirk's Derby ward, made the call after it was revealed that three-quarters of all Conservative county councillors receive the payments in addition to their basic allowances of more than £10,000 a year.

Cllr. Owens said that he was shocked when a Freedom of Information request revealed that 33 Conservative county councillors - of 42 in total - receive the extra allowances, which he claims are worth typically between £7,000 and £8,000 a year and sometimes more.

He said; "Our West Lancashire believe that this is not only a recipe for confusion, with 'too many cooks' with overlapping responsibilities, but it is bad for democracy. It excessively increases the powers of patronage of the council leader who appoints the councillors to these positions of 'special responsibility'.

Councillor Adrian Owens

Our West Lancashire point out that at national Government level, the number of paid ministers is restricted, with a maximum of 95 MPs being able to serve as a Government Minister and they are calling for a limit on the number of councillors in top jobs to be set at the county council too.

Cllr. Owens concluded: "The county Conservatives have just proposed freezing the wages of the county's lowest paid employees for two years in a move I find unfair. Yet they happily spend taxpayers' money in this way.

"A responsibility allowance can't be 'special' when three out of every four members of the ruling group are receiving it.

"We've written to the independent panel that make recommendations on county councillor allowances proposing a limit of 16 councillors getting these special allowances. That would save many tens of thousands of pounds."

Lancashire County Council has been contacted for comment but at the time of going to press had not responded.

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Vacancies for casual staff at elections

IF you want to play a part in the borough's democratic process, now's your chance.

The Returning Officer for West Lancashire is inviting interest from members of the public who wish to be part of a pool of casual staff to be considered for election related work within the borough.

At every election the returning officer relies on dedicated additional staff to support the democratic process.

Roles include working in one of the numerous polling stations as a presiding officer or poll clerk; or working as a count assistant, sorting, verifying and counting the votes cast.

Being accepted into the Returning Officer's staff pool doesn't guarantee you will be offered a post but you may be contacted about short-term, election-specific roles as and when they arise.

Further information on the posts available and an application form can be found by visiting www.westlancs.gov.uk/jobs and clicking on 'polling day casual vacancies'.

Completed forms should be emailed to elections.staffing@westlancs.gov.uk or posted to: Elections Staffing, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk, L39 2DF.

To be eligible you must have the right to work in the UK and applicants should note that those appointed to casual election roles are employed directly by the Returning Officer and not by West Lancashire Borough Council.

Also, the Returning Officer is unable to employ anyone who is, or intends to, work or volunteer on behalf of any political party or candidate at any election.

Anyone who has previously undertaken this work and recently updated their contact details with the Returning Officer do not need to submit a fresh declaration of interest.

For further details visit the website listed above, or contact the elections team by email at elections.staffing@westlancs.gov.uk or by telephone on 01695 585014.

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Universal Credit to be rolled out in the borough from this week

WEST Lancs Council is reminding people that from today (Wednesday, December 13) Universal Credit full service is being introduced by the Government for all people in West Lancashire with a Liverpool or Wigan postcode when they make a new claim for benefits.

Universal Credit is now the main benefit for most working-age claimants. It replaces the following six benefits and puts them into one single monthly payment: Income based job seekers allowance; Income related employment support allowance; Income support; Child tax credit; Working tax credit; Housing benefit.

This means if you wish to make a new claim for benefits you will need to claim Universal Credit and your claim must be made online.

More information is available on www.gov.uk/universal-credit, or the council website www.westlancs.gov.uk/uc.

Councillor Jenny Forshaw, West Lancs Council's portfolio holder for housing and landlord services, said: "We want to remind people that from December 13 the Government is introducing Universal Credit for all people in West Lancashire with a Liverpool or Wigan postcode when they make a new claim for benefits."

It's important to remember that if you do make a claim for Universal Credit this will include a payment for your rent costs. Universal Credit claimants do not receive housing benefit so it's really important that you don't delay making a new claim.

Pensioners and people living in supported exempt accommodation should continue to claim housing benefit from West Lancashire Borough Council to cover rent payments.

People already claiming Universal Credit prior to December 13 should be moved to the full service within three months. They will be advised by Universal Credit how this will happen nearer the time.

Councillor Jenny Forshaw

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Councillor slams county decision to axe grant scheme

Deputy leader of Labour group says local community organisations and volunteers will miss out on vital support

Report by **Henry James**

A WEST Lancashire County Councillor has slammed a decision by the county's ruling Conservative group to scrap the Local Members Grant Scheme which, he says, will see community groups in the borough missing out on £24,000.

Under the scheme, every county councillor, regardless of political affiliation, had £3,000 to award to organisations in their own areas annually.

In West Lancs this amounted to a total of £24,000. Among the groups to benefit were the elderly, veterans' associations, disabled groups, community volunteers and sports organisation.

During the last financial year, county councillors across Lancashire gave approval to almost 500 grants. Most were one-offs of relatively low value, typically £250 to £500 per award, and were not used for core funding but for specific projects, special occasions and equipment.

The county council has defended the decision to axe the scheme as it seeks to make cutbacks in the face of budget reductions.

However, County Councillor John Fillis, deputy leader of the Labour group, accused the administration of targeting the most vulnerable.

Councillor John Fillis

Cllr. Fillis, who represents Skelmersdale East on the county council, said: "I'm proud to say that we have been able to support so many great people over the years who have worked not for themselves but for others. They will continue to do their best, but we are asking more and more from volunteers with less resources to back them up.

"This move is typical of the Conservatives, cutting thousands of pounds of funding from local volunteer groups supporting the most vulnerable in the community, who are just trying to do their bit to help others.

"The council claims that alternative grants are available but as we all know they have already been cut.

"In the grand scheme of things £24,000 is not a lot of money to the county council but £250 for a local voluntary group can help them organise a trip for armed forces veterans or buy sports equipment for young people and even a cooker to prepare meals for the elderly and others at Christmas.

"When people see the government blowing billions of pounds on tax dodgers, buying votes from the DUP and Brexit, you can clearly see that's its ordinary people paying the price of Conservative cuts."

Leader of Lancashire County Council, Councillor Geoff Driver, said: "We have made no secret of the fact that the county council faces an extremely serious financial challenge. We know that we will face a funding gap of £161m in 2021/22 and that we will have spent the county council's available reserves within the next two years.

"It is imperative that we put plans in place to make the necessary savings to secure a sustainable future for the county council, and the vital services that our most vulnerable residents rely on.

"The total county-wide cost of these grants is £252,000 every year and it must be seen in the context of the need for us to find £160m savings in the next four years.

"It is a pity that, as ever, Labour county councillors cannot see that, nor do they suggest alternative savings."

Civic couple join in the fun at Lions Club Christmas party

The Mayor and Mayoress of West Lancashire, Councillor Neil and Mrs Julie Furey were among the guests at the Ormskirk and Maghull Lions Club's Christmas Party at Aughton Village Hall for children with physical and mental impairments.

Youngster completes 'Channel' swim marathon in aid of spinal cord charity

AN Ormskirk high school pupil has swam the equivalent distance of the English Channel to raise money for people paralysed by spinal cord injury.

Isaac Walton, 12, from Westhead, joined up for the Aspire Channel Swim in September to swim 22 miles in 12 weeks in a local pool.

Aspire is a national charity that works with people with spinal cord injuries to create opportunity, independence and choice.

They receive no statutory funding, so every penny raised through the swim helps their vital work.

Having completed the challenge Isaac has raised more than £100 for the cause.

The Year 7 pupil at Ormskirk School and member of 30th Ormskirk Scouts (Lathom Park) group, said: "I signed up for the challenge to push myself to the limits and raise money while also improving my swimming stamina.

"At times I thought it seemed that I had a long way to go so I often went to Park Pool straight after school to do some more lengths."

Proud mum, Catherine, added: "Isaac was determined to complete the 1,416 lengths in the 12 weeks, nothing was going to get in his way. We are very proud of what he has achieved."

Isaac's fundraising page is still open for anyone who would like to donate at www.justgiving.com/fundraising/isaac-walton-2017-channel-swim-20451.

Young Isaac Walton swam the equivalent of the length of the English Channel in 12 weeks to raise money for spinal injury sufferers.

Georgina Callander memorial bench

FOLLOWING our article on a plaque which was unveiled in Tarleton to Manchester Arena bomb victim, Georgina Callander, we have been asked to point out that a memorial bench, mentioned in the same article, was not, in fact, paid for by Headlines Hair as stated, but by Louise (who works for Headlines) and Charles Cousins.

Champion News Desk Tel. 01704 392400

Plans for new teaching facility at Martin Mere

PLANS to create a new teaching structure at Martin Mere Wetlands Centre which will enable children to enjoy outdoor learning in all weathers have been submitted to West Lancs Council.

The plans, drawn up by the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, propose to improve upon the current pond-dipping facility with a new bespoke pond-dipping area and replace a dome with a new teaching facility.

The proposals state: "A series of four raised dipping ponds, covered with a walk- through net that will significantly increase diversity in ponds and subsequent learning value.

"Landscape improvements to the large natural pond will allow for a wild type dipping experience.

"A new teaching structure will replace an existing geodesic dome to provide space so outdoor learning can take place regardless of the weather, providing unique outdoor learning activities in which education staff at Martin Mere deliver inspiring learning programs around water topics, to both school groups and visitors."

The decision for determination has been delegated to the director of development and regeneration, John Harrison, unless a member requests for it to be considered by the Planning Committee.

Members of the public can comment on the proposed development at West Lancs Council's website at www.westlancs.gov.uk/planning, using reference 2017/1275/FUL.

The deadline for comments is Thursday, January 18.

December Deadlines
Due to the festive period, the booking deadlines for advertising are as follows:
For publication Wednesday 27th December 2017
DEADLINE
4pm on Thursday 21st December 2017
For publication Wednesday 3rd January 2018
DEADLINE
4pm on Friday 29th December 2017

Bryan Collier (left) and Stuart Cunningham present the cheque to Sister Bernadette Knight.

£500 donation for hospice

MEMBERS of a community charity which aims to help relieve poverty and sickness of the elderly in Lathom have made a donation to Queenscourt Hospice.

Stuart Cunningham, clerk of the Lady Lathom Endowment and Memorial Fund and trustee, Bryan Collier, presented a cheque for £500 to Sister Bernadette Knight from the hospice in Town Lane, Southport which cares for patients with serious illnesses from West Lancashire and Sefton.

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Council announce Christmas and New Year opening times

WEST Lancs Council have announced details of opening times for council departments and services over the Christmas and New Year period.

The council offices at Derby Street, Ormskirk, and in Skelmersdale will close at noon on Friday, December 22 and re-open at 9am on Tuesday, January 2.

Other details are as follows:

Customer Services - telephone enquiries

The Customer Contact Centre will close at noon on Friday, December 22 and re-open at 8.30am on Tuesday, January 2. The phone number remains the same for emergency calls when the offices are closed: 01695 577177. Details can also be found at www.west-lancs.gov.uk.

Revenues and Benefits Service

The Revenues and Benefits Service will close at noon on Friday, December 22 and re-open at 9am on Tuesday, January 2. You can still make payments during this period by using the automated telephone payment line available 24 hours a day on 01695 585150 or by visiting the council's website at www.westlancs.gov.uk.

Emergency Housing Services

Emergency repairs will be carried out over the holiday period and tenants who require an emergency repair should telephone 01695 577177. For all other housing emergencies (including homelessness), telephone the same number.

Refuse and Recycling

There will be some change to collections over the Christmas and New Year period. If you are due a collection on Tuesday, December 26 it will take place on Saturday, December 23. All other collections remain unchanged. For a copy of your collection calendar and more details on refuse and recycling collections over the festive period, visit www.westlancs.gov.uk/refuse.

Please note that all green bin collections will be suspended weeks commencing December 25 and January but other materials for recycling will be collected. If you need to dispose of your real Christmas tree you can sign up to the council's garden waste service. Visit www.westlancs.gov.uk/gardenwaste to find out more.

Street Cleansing

Street Cleansing crews will be working every day, apart from Christmas Day cleaning the town centres after the festive celebrations and emptying litter bins across the borough.

The Chapel Gallery will close on Saturday, December 23 and re-open on Tuesday, January 2.

Chapel Gallery

The Chapel Gallery will close on Saturday, December 23 and will re-open on Tuesday, January 2.

Beacon Park Golf Centre

The Beacon Park Golf Centre will be closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. Reduced opening times will be in operation over the festive period. For further information telephone 01695 625551.

Car Parks - Pay and Display

Car parking will be free of charge on all council-managed pay and display car parks on Monday and Tuesday, December 25 and 26 and Monday, January 1.

Ormskirk Market

There will be a market as normal in Ormskirk town centre on Saturday, December 23, Thursday, December 28 and Saturday, December 30.

West Lancashire Community Leisure Trust

Reduced opening times will be in operation over the festive period. Contact individual centres for further details or visit www.westlancsleisure.com. Banks Leisure Centre: 01704 212970; Nye Bevan Pool: 01695 727111; Park Pool: 01695 576325; Burscough Racquet and Fitness Centre: 01704 895266.

Call to clear overgrown footpaths on busy road

Report by **Kenny Parker**

Village resident says combination of narrow walkways and blind bends is an "accident waiting to happen"

A VILLAGER says he fears someone will be seriously injured or even killed unless something is done to clear the footpaths near to his home.

Ricky Ball from Bescar Lane, Scarisbrick claims that some of the paths, particularly on the busy B5242 Dam Wood Lane which links Burscough to Southport, are so overgrown with foliage that only a few inches remain for pedestrians to walk along.

The 54-year-old says the problem is so bad on one blind bend on the road that pedestrians have to step out into the carriageway putting them in serious danger of being struck by traffic.

'Terrifying'

Ricky, who has lived in the area for 25 years, says: "I am particularly concerned about the path on this bend. In my opinion this is a serious accident waiting to happen.

"It's literally a leap into the unknown stepping off that pavement - it's terrifying and not very nice at all."

He says he has not made his complaint directly to Lancashire County Council, the highways authority, as he believes they would ignore his plea.

"I didn't think it would get me anywhere complaining to the county council, I thought I would just be fobbed off.

"I wanted to make a bit of an issue of it in the local press in the hope that it would draw attention to the problem and force the authority to act on it."

Ricky claims that some of the footpaths in question have not been checked in 12 or possibly 18 months and he believes the county council are failing in their duty to maintain the highways.

He says if residents want the footpaths outside their homes cleared they have to do it themselves.

"That is disgraceful really when you consider we are paying a quite high amount of council tax - we are just not getting the services we need or deserve."

Lancashire County Council has been contacted for comment but at the time of going to press had not responded.

One of the pathways which Ricky Ball says pose a danger to pedestrians walking along a village road

Nursery's Nativity will be a 'Knitivity' this year!

YOUNGSTERS at a West Lancs nursery will be performing a 'woolly' rendition of the Christmas story this year - thanks to the donation of Nativity outfits and knitted figures.

The Nursery on the Hill, next to Christ Church, Parbold, will be hosting a 'Knitivity' at the church on Monday, December 18 when the children will tell the Christmas story in the outfits and with the knitted figures donated to the church by a nursery in Bolton which closed down in April.

The event starts at 11.30am and the church says members of the local community are welcome to take part.

Parish priest, the Reverend Sue Timmins, welcomed the decision by the management of the nursery to join forces with Christ Church for the first time this year. She said: "It is a joy for us to have the youngsters in church at this special time of our Christian calendar and we were clearly meant to have the knitted figures for the nursery to use as part of the service."

Sue Sumner, deputy manager of the nursery, added: "We are delighted to be forming this relationship with Christ Church.

"Our nursery aims to be a real community asset in the village, and the support we have received from Christ Church for this 'Knitivity' initiative is most welcome."

Some of the children in their knitted outfits with Reverend Timmins and nursery staff

Children's Society charity shop volunteer Abby getting some of the items ready for the Dress for Less show at The Civic.

Charity shop to hold catwalk fundraiser

FABULOUS fashions and knockout knitwear will be paraded down the catwalk this week when staff and volunteers from The Children's Society charity shop in Ormskirk hold a 'Dress for Less' seasonal fashion show and sale to raise money for the cause.

The event, running from 7 to 10pm on Thursday (December 14) at The Civic in Southport Road, will provide an opportunity to buy some of the best items that the shop has to offer and help a good cause at the same time.

There will also be a raffle and organisers say the show will provide the perfect opportunity to grab some stylish winter clothes and party pieces for the holiday season without spending a fortune.

All money raised will help support The Children's Society's work with disadvantaged children, including those affected by abuse, hardship and neglect.

Shop manager, Heather Jones, said: "We're really excited to be holding this special seasonal pre-loved fashion show.

"We hope lots of people come along and pick up some great items before Christmas and New Year parties get into full swing, and at the same time help us raise money for vulnerable children and young people.

"Our fantastic shop volunteers will be modelling all the clothes and strutting their stuff down the catwalk. It should be a really fun night and we welcome people to come along, enjoy the show and bag some bargains."

Tickets for the event, priced £5, can be bought in advance at The Children's Society charity shop at 36 Church Street, Ormskirk or on the door on the night.

The charity shop is open from 9am to 5pm, Monday toSaturday.

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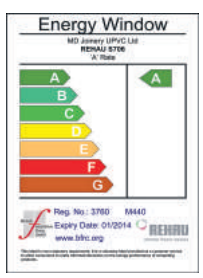

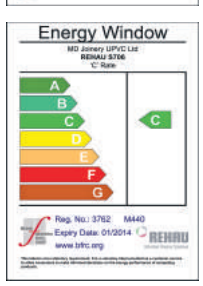

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Shoppers urged to be on the look-out for fake banknotes

Report by **Tom Martin**

CHRISTMAS shoppers are being urged to be on the look-out for counterfeit banknotes during the festive period.

Independent crime-fighting charity, Crimestoppers, revealed that in the first half of 2017, more than 237,000 fake banknotes with a notional value of around £4.88 million were removed from the UK's streets.

And they are reminding residents not to be duped because it's not a victimless crime, as many retailers, businesses, schools, charities and the elderly have been conned out of money by those using fake notes.

Shoppers urged to look out for fake banknotes

Christmas is a time when more cash changes hands, especially £20 and £50 notes, and fraudsters take advantage of the festive season by targeting busy shops with temporary staff.

Incidents include scammers tricking innocent members of the public into swapping fake £20 notes for two genuine £10 notes, and businesses being left out of pocket if they take a counterfeit note.

Director of Operations for Crimestoppers, Roger Critchell, said: "Fake notes are completely worthless and knowingly holding or passing on counterfeit notes is a crime.

"The purpose of this campaign is to raise awareness of counterfeit money, especially around Christmas when money can be tight, but also to highlight how heartless and callous fraudsters can be when targeting their victims.

"I'd ask that anyone with information on those selling counterfeit notes contact Crimestoppers anonymously, safe in the knowledge no one will know you spoke to us, and knowing you may have prevented someone's Christmas from being ruined."

Ben Crosland, senior manager of Banknote Engagement and Communications at the Bank of England, added: "The general public play an important role when it comes to reporting counterfeit currency. Campaigns like this and the recently-launched Banknote Checking Scheme, are essential to encourage the public and businesses to help us and law enforcement stop the counterfeiters."

If you have information on those making, selling or buying counterfeit notes then you can contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 or through their online forum at crimestoppers-uk.org/give-info.

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Talks held in bid to end Arriva bus drivers dispute

TALKS are underway with the aim of bringing an end to the dispute between bus drivers and Arriva amid fears of travel chaos if a planned strike for the Friday before Christmas (December 22) goes ahead, as it would coincide with a rail strike.

Report by **Henry James**

Arriva bus company bosses have held talks with drivers and a planned strike which was due to take place on Tuesday, December 12 was cancelled.

Bus drivers are still set to strike on Thursday, December 14, Wednesday, December 20, Thursday, December 21, as well as Friday, December 22 (dubbed 'Mad Friday' as it marks many workers finishing for the Christmas holidays and going out to celebrate) and Saturday, December 23.

Arriva North West Bus managing director, Phil Stone, said: "Arriva North West has tabled a new two-year pay agreement with the unions, which the unions have now taken to a ballot.

"We are pleased that the unions agreed to cancel strike action on Tuesday, December 12.

"We believe our latest offer guaranteeing a two-year pay rise represents a fair and decent deal for our drivers and hope the pay offer is accepted by our staff and we can return to delivering the best possible service to our passengers and the local economy."

Meanwhile, a spokesman for Merseyrail said: "As on previous strike days, we will endeavour to provide as many trains as possible, and timetable details will be disclosed over the next week or so.

"We are keen to see an end to this dispute.

"At the request of the Liverpool Metro mayor, Merseyrail has agreed to independent conciliation with the RMT, with no pre-conditions."

Rail unions, however, accused the metro mayor of taking part in a 'political stunt' and acting as a "human shield for profiteering private rail companies."

A spokesman for the RMT said: "The Mayor has let the rail company off the hook and has been a major factor in the reason that there has been no invitation to attend any meaningful talks with ACAS, the company or anyone else as normal industrial relations have been effectively suspended."

Arriva bus workers outside the company's Southport office during a recent 24-hour stoppage

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said: "Our members on Merseyrail are angry that senior Labour figures have chosen to ignore party policy on Driver Only Operation to side with the company rather than our safety-critical guards. If those politicians had taken a pro-active stance, we could move towards a solution to this dispute.

"The fact that we have been unable to make any progress whatsoever with the company means we have no option but to put this action on.

"The City and Regional Labour leaders need to stand with the passengers, the workers and the people of Merseyside, and not the few – Tory ministers and bosses of the private operator Merseyrail."

County council says £1m budget boost will mean 'better' services for passengers

LANCASHIRE County Council bosses have claimed that "new and better" bus routes launched in the borough this week "will see public transport restored to a number of villages, and more frequent services making travel much easier on other routes."

The new services began on Monday (December 11) after the county council agreed to make an extra £1m available to support bus services, increasing the budget from £2m to £3m.

The authority says that key priorities have been to restore lost links between communities, particularly in rural areas where people who don't drive or own a car rely most on public transport; increase the frequency of services on routes where there is more demand; and stabilise the network to support routes which might otherwise disappear.

County Councillor Andrew Snowden, the county council's lead member for highways and transport, said: "These new buses will transform travel in many rural areas of Lancashire by restoring public transport to villages which currently have none and making it far more convenient to use the bus in other places where there are currently only a handful of services each day.

"We've worked hard to make sure these proposals make the most impact with the resources available and already know from feedback we've received that many people are looking forward to having a decent bus service again."

The county council says revisions to the 347 service, and a new 337 service will restore rural village links and mean more buses on routes across West Lancashire to Chorley, Southport and Ormskirk.

Sister's renewed appeal on behalf of African orphans

A NUN from Parbold has launched a renewed appeal for donations to help orphaned children in Africa.

Sister Margaret Rose first went out to the Democratic Republic of Congo 18 years ago to help launch The Gorsilaure Project which takes in destitute children and gives them a home and schooling up to university level.

Run by Father Simon Lumbela at the Gorsilaure Children's Village in Qinsantu, Bas-Congo, the project also has a hospital with maternity and surgical units, as well as overseeing farming, food production and manufacturing schemes.

Although she returned to the UK after three years, 75-year-old Sister Margaret, a member of Sister of Notre Dame congregation in Parbold, has continued to work for the project seeking to raise its profile in this country.

To donate, contact project finance officer Peter Harding on 01383 822540 or 07963 606 677, or email peterharding48@aol.co.uk.

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Advertising Feature

ABLEWORLD SOUTHPORT

Ableworld, the UK's leading mobility company, is delighted to announce the opening of its latest store in Southport.

Local businessman, Barry Pearson, secured a joint venture deal with Ableworld, the UKs largest mobility retailer back in 2014 and since then has expanded his retail operation across the North West. He has great success in offering quality mobility products at fantastic prices in the St Helens, Wigan, Wavertree and Salford area's and now hopes to provide the same support and help to Southport.

Speaking back in 2014 Barry explained: "I am very aware that there are a range of operators in this sector with very mixed reputations as people may have seen on recent television documentaries. Therefore, I spent a long time researching the market place and identified Ableworld as leaders in their field." "I was very impressed" he adds "with the company's strong ethics in addition to its business model. There are no sales teams and strict internal guidelines and procedures. I have also got to know Mike and his team at Ableworld well and they genuinely share my own passion for customer care, which is why they have such a strong reputation in the sector".

From spacious premises, the store stocks a very wide range of products including larger items such as mobility scooters, wheelchairs, adjustable beds and rise and recline chairs but also many smaller items to help with day to day tasks. Ableworld also hold a wide range of products to help with bathing, toileting and dressing as well as a range of continence care products. Ableworld also installs stairlifts and service scooters. Whatever the product, the aim is to help people to lead easier, more comfortable and independent lives.

Ableworld Southport is located at the **Shakespeare Centre, Shakespeare Street, Southport, PR8 5AB** (near the Lawnmower Museum in Southport) and is easy and convenient to reach with ample free parking. Whatever your needs, you can be assured of a range of quality products from names you can trust.

Why not call in?
Open 9am to 5.30pm Monday to Saturday,
Tel: 01704 537631

Carol-singing fundraiser at supermarket

THE Ormskirk & District branch of the Cystic Fibrosis Trust will be performing Christmas carols at the Morrisons Supermarket in Park Road, Ormskirk on Saturday, December 16 from 10.30am.

Anyone who enjoys singing or listening to carols and can spare an hour or so is welcome to go along.

All funds raised will be in aid of the Cystic Fibrosis Trust.

Further details from Margaret Ellams, tel. 07753801345, email mfellams@hotmail.com.

Residents can go online to check if weather is affecting council services

WEST Lancs Council is advising the public that they can stay informed about council services if they are affected by winter weather by keeping an eye on the website www.westlancs.gov.uk/winter and following @WestlancsBC on Twitter.

Residents and businesses can find out up-to-the-minute information if there are changes to services as a result of adverse weather conditions.

Signing up to Twitter is free and can be done at www.twitter.com. The 'blue light' emergency services also use Twitter to give out urgent information.

By accessing the council website or following the authority on Twitter you can get the latest information about any changes to services, including refuse and recycling collections.

The council is also urging residents to be prepared for floods, and to check if they need to take steps to protect their homes.

Councillor Ian Moran

The storms in the winter of 2015, in particular Storm Eva on Boxing Day, had devastating effects. It caused the worst flooding ever recorded in West Lancashire and almost 300 properties were flooded internally. Many people had to leave their homes because of the damage.

Information to help residents decide if they should take steps to protect their property is provided on the council website. There is also information about what to do if a flood occurs at www.westlancs.gov.uk/flooding.

Council leader, Councillor Ian Moran, said: "By keeping an eye on our website and following us on Twitter people will receive important updates about affected borough council services, as soon as they happen. I would encourage people to go online to find out more about winter services.

"Homes and communities can be devastated by flooding and we urge people to go to the website, look at the flood awareness pages and consider what action they should take. Visit www.westlancs.gov.uk/flooding."

Lancashire County Council provides information on services such as highways, gritting and school closures.

To find more log on to www.westlancs.gov.uk/winter.

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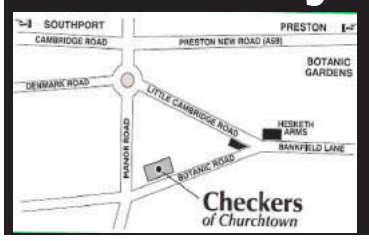

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Parking dilemma is a 'fine' mess for Rob!

Report by **Kenny Parker**

THE owner of an Ormskirk town centre business who says he is caught in a perpetual cycle of receiving parking tickets because he has nowhere to park his van, is refusing to pay any more penalties.

Rob Harper, 35, is co-director with his father, also called Rob, of Harpers Furniture Store and Beds. The shop is situated on pedestrianised Moor Street and its access for deliveries is via a narrow lane at the back.

However, the lane is also needed for access to the neighbouring B&M and Holland & Barrett stores and Mr Harper says that whenever they are receiving deliveries he is not able to park his van at the back of his store.

Rob Harper - and van - outside his Harpers Furniture Store and Beds shop premises

Consequently, during such times, he has been leaving his van, which he uses frequently for deliveries and trips to the warehouse, on double yellow lines in nearby Leyland Way, along with a note in the window to inform parking enforcement officers of the situation.

However, despite the notes, he says Lancashire County Council traffic wardens persist in issuing him with parking tickets. He has received three in the last three months. Each time he has appealed against the tickets but each appeal has failed.

Now, after receiving another penalty notice, he is refusing to pay and is aiming to take the matter further.

"I want to go to a tribunal. I can't just keep paying. Obviously I need the van for my business but when access to the shop is blocked I have nowhere else to park it!"

He says his only other option would be to use local borough council-run car parks but this would be both costly and impractical.

Pointing out that he pays around £20,000 annually in business rates, he feels local authorities should be working with local businesses not against them.

He said: "We are not asking for much. We don't want to park there 24/7 just when the other businesses are receiving deliveries."

County council guidance on appealing against a parking ticket says it is a three-stage process. Firstly, an informal challenge should be made by letter, with the opportunity to make a formal appeal if this is rejected. If the appeal fails, the matter can be taken to an independent parking adjudicator for a decision.

Mr Harper has had his first informal appeal against the latest parking ticket rejected and is now appealing at the second stage.

A spokesman for Lancashire County Council said: "A vehicle can be parked on double yellow lines for a short period when continuously loading and unloading for commercial purposes.

"Before deciding whether to issue a penalty our enforcement officers observe vehicles which are parked on double yellow lines for five minutes to see if someone is loading or unloading. However a penalty will be issued if no activity is observed."

Merseyrail fares to rise in new year

MERSEYRAIL ticket prices are to go up early in the new year but the company maintain that fares overall on the network will remain among the lowest in the UK.

In 2018, the average ticket price increase will be 3.6 per cent, while the prices of some of Merseyrail's tickets will be frozen.

Other announcements include:

- **A Daysaver will increase by 10p to £5.20, a rise of 2 per cent.**
- **The cost of a family ticket will stay the same at £11.**
- **The most expensive ticket will be £8.65, which is a return from Chester to Southport.**
- **The cheapest ticket will be £2, which is a return from Liverpool to Sandhills.**

Commercial director, David O'Leary, commented: "Each year, we work hard to keep fares as low as possible. In 2018, the price of some tickets will go up in line with the Retail Price Index, reflecting the rising cost of operating the network.

"In spite of this, Merseyrail fares still represent good value for money, ensuring that our network remains accessible to the majority, supports communities and boosts the local economy."

The changes will take effect on Tuesday, January 2.

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Town centre is all 'dressed up' for the festive celebrations!

Businesses entering into seasonal spirit with window decorations and heritage-inspired artworks displays

SHOPKEEPERS across Ormskirk are entering into the festive spirit by decorating their windows for the town's Festival of Tales Best Dressed Festive Window Competition 2017.

Shoppers are urged to look for the 'A Festival of Tales' stickers in the windows of around 20 retailers in Ormskirk town centre. These shops have made a special effort with seasonal decorations to make their businesses look even more inviting, and the town itself more festive.

Members of the public can vote for their favourite shop window by visiting www.chapelgallery.org.uk, and the business with the most votes will win £100.

A Festival of Tales is a feast of visual art, creative writing and performance featuring works by local and international artists and writers, all inspired by Ormskirk's fascinating heritage.

Ormskirk town centre itself has become a gallery and theatre, with the streets animated by artworks specially made for the event and performances centred around the Clock Tower.

As well as the best dressed window competition, seven shops are hosting artworks on the A Festival of Tales Art Trail.

Internationally renowned artist, Su Blackwell, has made a replica of the Clock Tower which is located in Church Walks, while West Lancashire-based artist, Matthew Roby, has created a Giant Gingerbread Man who has had a disastrous romantic encounter with a Victoria sponge and can be seen in Waterstones window.

For a map of the trail pop into the Chapel Gallery, or visit www.chapelgallery.org.uk, where you can also find more information on many other festival activities, including free writing workshops, creative activities and a design your own Ormskirk Postcard competition.

Councillor Yvonne Gagen, West Lancs Council's portfolio holder for leisure, said: "I am really pleased that shops are getting involved in A Festival of Tales by entering the Best Dressed Festive Window Competition and hosting some of the artworks for the Art Trail.

"A Festival of Tales is a wonderful event for Ormskirk town centre so come along and enjoy the fantastic activities that are on offer."

A Festival of Tales is being developed by West Lancs Council's Arts Development Service, Ormskirk Town Centre Management Group, and Edge Hill University in partnership with local businesses.

The festival has received a £15,000 grant from the Arts Lottery Programme.

ADVERTISING FEATURE

WWT Martin Mere news

Special Floodlit Swan Evenings at WWT Martin Mere

Want to buy a Christmas present with a difference? WWT Martin Mere Wetland Centre is hosting special Floodlit Swan Evenings every Tuesday night in January from the 9th until 30th. Floodlit swan evenings is a great opportunity to be on site afterhours, meet the wardens and see large numbers of swans by floodlight – and you can purchase tickets today as a gift.

During the evening you will learn all about the swans including their migration route, why they come to Martin Mere, the research we undertake and what we have learnt over the last 20 years.

Reserve Manager, Tom Clare, said: "Each swan is individual and has a unique bill pattern, similar to how humans have fingerprints as well as many of them having a ring around either their left (female) or right (male) leg which makes them very easy to identify. From this research we have been able to build up family trees, learn divorce rate in swans and get accurate information as to where they spend the summer. It is absolutely fascinating to get to know the swans on a personal level and it is exciting when you spot a swan with a ring on its leg as you know you can find out all about it. Evenings like floodlit swans means you can come along and learn about the swans in a lot more detail."

You must book in advance to come along to a floodlit swan evening by calling **01704 895181**.
The cost for an adult is: £10.03 and a concession is: £7.33. The evenings start at 6.30pm and last until approximately 8pm.

In other news at the centre, the Christmas holidays will soon be upon us and the centre is continuing with the swan theme by introducing a swan booklet that highlights 6 of our ringed swans for visitors to go out and search for, as well as a swan pipe in the exhibition hall for visitors to walk through a swan catch as a swan – take measurements, create your own ring and then be released back into the grounds to see our swan, otter and white stork feeds.

WWT Martin Mere Wetland Centre is open every day (except Christmas Day) from 9.30am to 4.30pm during winter months and parking is free of charge. Situated off the A59, it is signposted from the M61, M58 and M6. The Centre is also accessible via the Southport to Manchester and the Liverpool to Preston line by train from Burscough Rail Stations.

Visit the web site:
www.wwt.org.uk/martinmere
to find out what's on all year round at Martin Mere and the other eight WWT Wetland Centres.

Visit the web site www.wwt.org.uk/martinmere to find out what's on the reserve at the moment as well as all the upcoming events

Minister challenged on rail links promise

Report by **Henry James**

West Lancs MP Rosie Cooper has pledged to keep pushing for improved rail links for the borough

ROSIE Cooper has challenged Transport Secretary Chris Grayling to keep his pre-election promises to the people of West Lancashire and challenged his "disregard" for transport links in the borough.

Before this year's General Election Mr Grayling visited West Lancashire and declared that reinstatement of the Burscough Curves would be a "quick win."

And following the announcement that rail lines closed or ripped up under the infamous Beeching Report in the 1960s could be reopened to improve transport links, the West Lancs MP took the opportunity to seek the reassurance from the minister of his commitment to transport in the borough.

Speaking in Parliament, Ms Cooper asked: "When will we get this quick win?" on the Burscough Curves, and also about funding for the electrification of rail in the area and funding for a railway station in Skelmersdale.

She also claimed that Mr Grayling had showed "incredible ignorance" in his response stating that the people of West Lancashire would get the benefit of the investment programme in the line from Manchester to Blackpool!

Ms Cooper said: "I was pleased when the Transport Secretary Chris Grayling visited West Lancashire in April this year and declared that reinstatement of the Burscough Curves would be a 'quick win' for the area.

"Eight months on, and following more promising news about investment in rail travel, I took the opportunity to seek Mr Grayling's reassurance on his promise. Unfortunately, he showed a complete disregard to residents of West Lancashire, by stating that they will benefit from the Manchester to Blackpool line!

"I will be writing to the Department for Transport to ask again, when will the funding come to our area as promised by the Transport Secretary, who seems to have forgotten both exactly where we are and the promises he made on his visit in April.

"I will continue to campaign and push for the Burscough Curves to be reopened and am working with all the relevant bodies to make progress.

"I have consistently said that a railway station in the heart of Skelmersdale will open up a world of economic and social opportunities for the town and its residents.

"I had hoped that when the Transport Secretary made his promise that he had listened and realised what transformation a railway station would bring to Skelmersdale and that reopening the Burscough Curves would mean much easier and quicker journeys from Burscough. Sadly, it seems the only quick win he was interested in was the General Election seat in which the Conservatives failed miserably.

"West Lancashire residents want to see urgent action and promises kept by the Transport Secretary, and I shall keep reminding him of his words."

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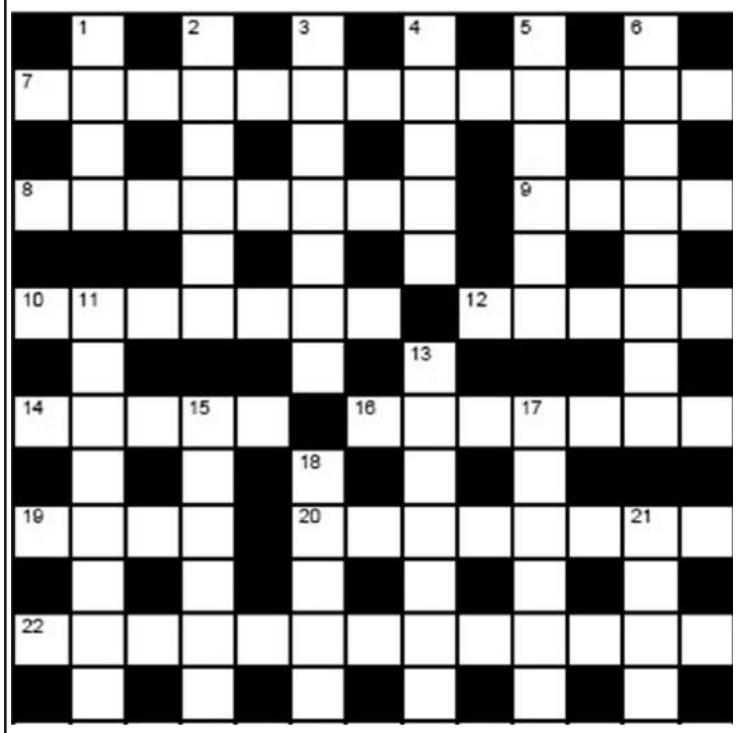

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Down: 1. Ice age. 2. Hate. 3. Slammer. 4. Umbra. 5. Cash desk. 6. Always. 12. Calendar. 14. Goulash. 16. Adonis. 18 Grudge. 19. Haiku. 21. Sale.

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ACROSS

7. The process of strengthening or backing up (13)
8. Type of strong, black coffee (8)
9. A rapid surprise attack (4)
10. To convert (waste) into reusable material (7)
12. Small island (5)
14. Mentally prepare for a testing task or occasion (5)
16. Parting word (7)
19. Discharge, send forth (4)
20. Person qualified to prescribe and dispense glasses (8)
22. A helium nucleus emitted by some radioactive substances (5, 8)

DOWN

1. Payments made in exchanges for services (4)
2. Vitality or power source (6)
3. Seek advice or information from someone (7)
4. Thespian (5)
5. Stings (6)
6. (Of an event or act) happening or done at an inappropriate time (8)
11. A group of musicians, actors, or dancers who perform together (8)
13. Prize draw (7)
15. Word used to describe a tune or song that is easily remembered (6)
17. Act of concealing or distorting the truth (6)
18. Large, beaver-like South American rodent (5)
21. State formally co-operating with another (4)

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Health commissioners offer advice on accessing medical services over festive period

Report by **Kenny Parker**

BE prepared and know your options is the advice from the NHS West Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to people who might need medical services during the festive period.

Dr John Caine, West Lancashire GP and chair of the CCG, said: "Everyone wants to enjoy themselves at this time of the year, but a winter bug can dampen any spirits.

"The best advice that I can offer is to be prepared, if you are entitled to a free flu vaccination then make sure you get it, visit your pharmacist to ensure that you have the right at-home medication, order your repeat prescriptions using Patient Access well before the bank holiday rush and make sure that you have plenty of food in case of nasty weather.

"If you are unlucky and get poorly, knowing what to do and where to go for your specific medical need, will ensure that you have a speedy recovery."

For up-to-the-minute information on where to go if you fall ill during the bank holiday, visit the CCG website, http://www.westlancashireccg.nhs.uk/, as well as their Twitter and Facebook pages, or visit Examine Your Options: www.examineyouroptions.info.

There are a range of health services to support people if they feel unwell or have any health concerns.

Several pharmacies will be open throughout the Christmas bank holiday period. To find out which is open and when, visit the CCG website and check out their Twitter and Facebook pages for on-the-day updates.

Your local pharmacy can offer free, confidential and expert advice on a range of health issues and common winter illnesses.

You can also find advice about hundreds of health conditions and details of GPs and pharmacies in your local area by visiting www.nhs.uk. This useful website also includes a handy symptom checker.

When you need medical help or advice fast, but it is not a 999 emergency, you can also call the NHS 111 service. This is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and calls are free.

Your GP should be your first point of contact for non-emergency illnesses you can't treat yourself. If you don't have a GP, you can register with your local surgery. If you're not sure where this is, you can find out at www.nhs.uk or call 0300 311 22 33.

In West Lancashire, residents can now see a GP in the evenings and weekends at certain times. On Tuesdays from 6.30 to 8pm at the Skelmersdale Family Practice; on Wednesdays from 6.30 to 8pm at the Matthew Ryder Clinic in Up Holland and at the Tarleton Group Practice from 6.30 to 8pm; on Thursdays at the Urgent Treatment Centre (West Lancashire Walk-in Centre) in Ormskirk from 6.30 to 8pm.

At the weekend, you can see a GP, nurse and blood clinic at the Sandy Lane Health Centre in Skelmersdale on Saturday from 10am to 4pm, and on Sunday you can see a GP and nurse from 10am to 2pm.

To make an appointment to see an extended hours GP, contact your GP practice. However, as the extended access pilot does not operate on bank holidays, the service will not be available on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

Over the Christmas and New Year weekends, the extended access pilot will be available as follows:

At Burscough Health Centre: Saturday, December 23, 10am to 4pm; Sunday, December 24, 10am to 2pm; Saturday, December 30, 10am to 4pm; and Sunday, December 31,10am to 2pm.

Sandy Lane Health Centre, Skelmersdale: Saturday, December 23, 9am to 4pm; Sunday, December 24, 9am to 2pm; Saturday, December 30, 9am to 4pm; and Sunday, December 31, 9am to 2pm.

If your local surgery is closed, you can still see a GP with the GP out-of-hours service. Call 111 and you can speak to a local GP over the phone or face-to-face if necessary. For more information visit www.examineyouroptions.info.

West Lancashire has two walk-in centres. The Urgent Treatment Centre (West Lancashire Walk-in Centre) based at Ormskirk Hospital, Wigan Road. This is open from 8am to 8pm, seven days a week.

The Skelmersdale Walk-in Centre at The Concourse, is open from 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday and 9am to 5pm on Saturdays and Sundays.

On Christmas Day, the Ormskirk centre will open from 9am to 5pm, with Skelmersdale's open from 10am to 2pm. On Boxing Day, the Ormskirk centre will be open from 8am to 8pm and Skelmersdale from 9am to 5pm. On New Year's Day the Ormskirk centre will be open from 8am to 8pm and Skelmersdale from 9am to 5pm.

The staff within these centres, can treat minor injuries and minor ailments.

Meanwhile you can manage your repeat prescriptions and make GP appointments by using the new free Patient Access website and smartphone app. Simply search for 'Patient Access' in the app store.

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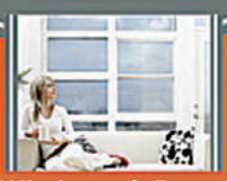

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Fayre raises £2,700 for Rainbow House

THE annual Christmas Fayre at Rainbow House raised £2,700 for the Mawdesley-based charity.

The event featured a host of family-orientated festive fun and entertainment including music, face-painting, arts and craft and Santa in his grotto.

There was also a raffle, tombola and lucky dip and volunteers from the Women's' Institute served tea and coffee.

Tracy Daglish, volunteer co-ordinator at Rainbow House, said: "Our thanks to everyone who supported the event and to the parents, staff and volunteers who worked so hard."

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Phil Levens pictured at the Ormskirk Parkrun with family members who turned out in support

Phil comes 'home' for final fundraising run in memory of mum

A MAN who has lived in East Lancashire for more than 30 years returned to his West Lancashire roots to complete the final leg of a personal fundraising challenge in memory of his late mother.

Phil Levens was born and brought up in Skelmersdale but moved to Burnley after being posted there when he joined the police.

The 60-year-old decided to support the Alzheimer's Society campaign to 'Run Down Dementia' when his mother, Alma, passed away this time last year after suffering with the illness for more than eight years.

He said: "My mother retained her happy personality despite the severe debilitating effects which affected her. She lived in the Aaron Crest Care Home in Skelmersdale and I used to bring her to Ormskirk every week for long walks around the parks."

After she died Phil committed himself to running 20 Parkruns in her memory in different locations as far away as York, Manchester, Leeds and Bangor.

He completed his final run at Ormskirk in the grounds of the Edge Hill University sports centre, supported by 14 members of his family - his brothers and sisters all still live in the area - who turned out to cheer him on.

Phil, who was joined on the run by daughter Deborah and her husband Richard, plus two of his grandchildren, Keira and Harvey, said: "We raised £380 for the charity but more importantly hopefully we are raising awareness of dementia and how to improve the quality of life for people who suffer from it."

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Champion LETTERS to the Editor

Clare House, 166 Lord Street, Southport PR9 0QA
tel 01704 392 400 email editor@champnews.com

Failure to resolve long-running bypass issue is a real smack in the mouth for local residents and businesses

THE subject of a bypass for Ormskirk has been a local political football longer than I can remember and it appears to be resurrected every time a diversion of one description or another is sought to take the heat away from something else.

Heavy through traffic using the A59 in either direction does not need to go into Ormskirk because there is already a route that was defined to facilitate this but later declassified from a trunk route at the Burscough end some many years ago. Why?

The traffic has become progressively heavier and probably made worse by the fact of the restricted and variable road speeds most of the way to Preston. HGVs are often seen going through Croston on-route to the M6 and M65 motorways.

The potential diversionary route of the B5242 that would take traffic between the A59 at the Booths Island and the A570 at the Morris Dancers is a route that has several 'pinch points', especially for articulated HGVs and the like, that when accidents happen - and they will - it will completely block any further movement until cleared.

The once relatively sleepy hamlet of Bescar, Scarisbrick and especially the area of approach to the railway level crossing and onward to the farms from the cross-roads is regularly pounded with HGVs and the huge tractor/trailer combinations that ferry the produce between the less accessible fields and farm locations.

I have come far too close for comfort in my cars than I care to recall. With the several very ignorant and somewhat complacent local Kamikaze rat-run users - including locals - who totally ignore the 30mph limits and the occasional HGV driver being misguided by a sat-nav, life for an otherwise alert and savvy driver is becoming a daily challenge.

With proper and well organised meetings there is no reason why a bypass route cannot be planned and executed with minimal disruption. The access and exit routes at both ends and any intermediate points could all be completed with minimum disruption to local living and movements.

Ormskirk has been dying on its feet for a rather long time and the consistent/regular snarl-ups with traffic coming in from the St Helens and Skelmersdale/Wigan directions have been adding to the problems for at least the last 20 years.

The several Strategic Spacial Strategies that have been developed, circulated with maps and then brushed aside because of relatively low-level objections without an alternative suggestion/proposal being agreed is really a real smack in the mouth for local businesses and residents.

It is now more than 11 years since the headline 'Rosie Cooper MP calls for more fight over Ormskirk Bypass' (January 31, 2006) and what has happened since? Absolutely nothing other than further local chaos, or have I been a member of the living dead society?

John Shepherd, by email.

Cut speed limits to avoid more deaths on country road

I SHARE concerns about the B5242 with 'Scarisbrick from Scarisbrick' (Letters, November 29).

I have lived in Bescar since 1991 and use this road regularly. Traffic has increased a lot since I came here. The large HGVs bowl along as if on a major road, some have to move onto whatever pavement is available to pass each other.

Add to that tractors, with huge wheels and trailers; cyclists, including pelotons at weekends; the crematorium traffic; and the busy area around Heaton's Bridge with the garage and pub and it can be a dangerous road - especially when you add speeding into the mix.

I believe the speed limits should be altered. At present, going roughly West to East, the speed limits are 30, 50, 40, 50, 30. In my opinion the two 50mph sections are the most dangerous - one through Dam Wood, the other beyond Smithy Lane, past the crematorium up to Pippin Street, before it gets to 30mph just short of Booths.

There are a lot of blind bends on this road, three of which are in Dam Wood. There are access and egress points within the wood and it can be quite dark, even in summer.

As you enter the Heaton's Bridge stretch, Worthington's Farm bend is virtually 90 degrees and the dwellings there hide Drummersdale Lane junction.

The number of people who take that at speed is astonishing. Carry on over the canal and the camber pushes you to the centre of the road, directly on a bend. In my view the whole road should be 30mph.

I went through the Worthington's Farm bend once and was confronted by a cyclist in my carriageway, on his side. His shoelace had got tied around his pedal. Had I been speeding I may have hit him.

Finally, I understand there have been at least two fatalities on this road in recent times. One near Worthington's Farm and the other in the middle of Dam Wood. We don't want anymore.

Mr A. Prescott,
Bescar Lane, Scarisbrick

PICTURE of the week

A scene (complete with a few flakes of genuine snow) from last Sunday's Nativity Musical staged by Churches Together in Formby, Altcar and Hightown at Formby Pool Gardens. Picture by Martyn Snape.

Council not to blame for butchers' disappointing switch-on trade

I WRITE to you in defence of the council's light switch-on in Ormskirk in response to the front page article (Champion, November 29) airing the owner of Broughs butcher's grievances about the council and street trading vendors.

As one of those street vendors I would like to clarify a few things. We are invited to big events to relieve the pressure during high attendances into the town, such as the lights switch-on.

We are professional outfits who have the correct insurance, hygiene, gas & electricity certificates and risk assessments in place, thus ensuring when we trade we have public safety at the forefront of our minds.

Our job is not to turn up at such events to damage local businesses. Broughs, who raised the issue, are only hygiene rated for the supply of raw meats. They are not insured to trade on the street.

People decided, as keyboard warriors do, to jump on the bandwagon pointing fingers while not understanding the facts.

The fact is we all had a disappointing trading night which was down to the weather and nothing else. The council, in my eyes, had done nothing wrong. They had invested and worked extremely hard to put on a show but Mother Nature dealt us a rough hand.

Speaking from the experience of attending lots of local authority light switch-ons I can say, hand on heart, Ormskirk's was the best by far.

Gerrard Aindow, managing director, Derby House Catering

Trees sacrificed to make way for development

ELEVEN tall, mature trees on a short stretch of the A59 in Burscough have been chopped down in a move to ease things for the developers of Yew Tree Farm.

West Lancs Council planning department made it a condition that several small trees must be retained on land for new-build housing.

Some people might be puzzled by this but I guess the Yew Tree Farm developers have pledged to plant loads of trees to make up for the loss. However, as has happened in the past, such pledges are forgotten once they have been given the go-ahead to build.

Some rules only apply to some people it seems.

Angry resident, details supplied.

County council is responsible for flood risk in West Lancs

FOLLOWING an on-site investigation into the flooding incidents in the gardens on Redgate, Ormskirk, I wish to make the following observations.

Whilst many people understandably assume that the responsibility for flood risk lies with West Lancs Borough Council it needs to be made clear that in fact the responsibility lies firmly with the Local Lead Flood Authority (LLF) which in our case is Lancashire County Council who have specific statutory duties to handle incidents such as these.

The fragmented nature of flood management comes about due to the system put in place by central government which makes finding quick solutions almost impossible due to the complex nature of arrangements and responsibilities.

Put simply, residents are caught in a 'double-whammy' of increasing cuts to local authorities, especially Lancashire County Council, which has had a detrimental impact on gully cleaning, highways maintenance and flood protection, all at a time which coincides with rising water levels, greater rainfall and extraordinary weather patterns to create an increase in the number of flood incidents previously unheard of.

Whilst WLBC cannot assume overall responsibility for monitoring, registering and remedial measures, we are very willing to play our role in helping to highlight 'hot spots' and to try and signpost residents towards the relevant agencies in order to seek solutions as per the Lancashire Flood Risk Management Strategy.

In my capacity as portfolio holder for planning, I will be writing to County Councillor Michael Green, the cabinet member for economic development, environment and planning, to ask how LCC has been recording and assessing such incidents across West Lancs, as there is no obvious evidence that these are currently being acted upon and they are only expected to increase with time.

There has been sterling work done by the Ormskirk Flood Action Group in this area, encouraging residents to provide details of local flooding 'hot spots' and the LLFA must now act to put in place some form of plan, ideally a Surface Water Management Plan, to progress matters.

I am currently conducting an investigative tour of West Lancs with the borough engineer to further identify problem areas and as yet uncharted culverts and ditches so that WLBC can contribute to LCC a more up-to-date picture to enable them to address problems in these locations.

Councillor J. E. Hodson, West Lancs Council

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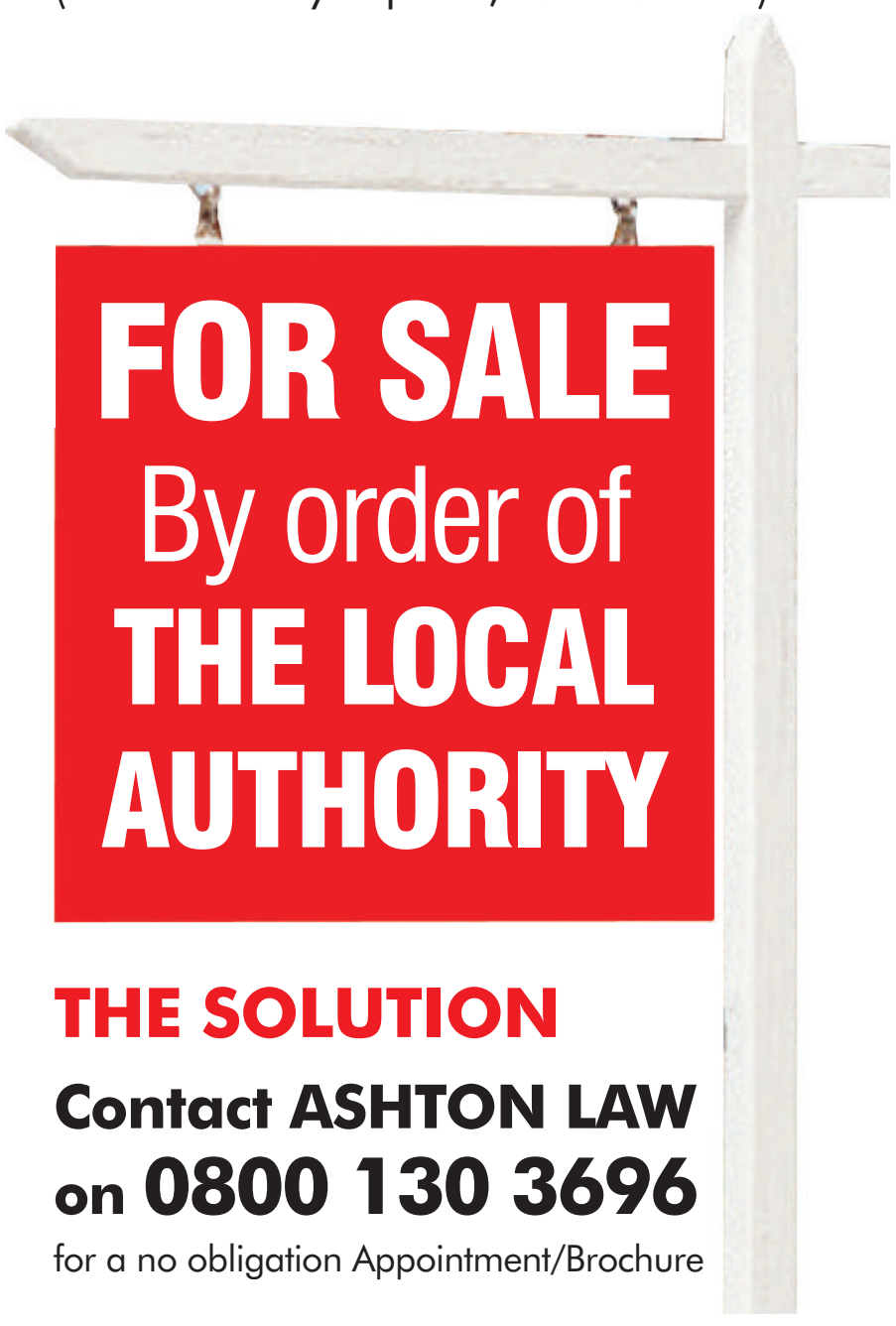

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Champion staff chip in for foodbank's Christmas appeal

STAFF at the Champion have been doing their bit to help the needy this festive season by donating food and toiletries to a local foodbank.

We held a collection for the Trussell Trust's Christmas appeal on behalf of its Southport Foodbank based at the Lakeside Christian Centre on the resort's Promenade.

The foodbank, which supports struggling residents every week, needs regular donations of dried and tinned food, coffee and tea and toiletries including soap, shampoo, toothpaste and nappies. For their Christmas appeal they also sought donations of tins of pressed turkey, chicken or ham, boxes of chocolates, jam or chocolate sponge pudding and tins of custard or custard mix.

Champion managing director, Lindsay Naylor, said: "At the Champion we support a variety of charities and local good causes. Especially at this magical time of the year, we believe it's important to think of others in the community less fortunate than ourselves and we hold an annual donation for one of the local foodbanks. This year we chose the Southport Foodbank, whose work with families on the breadline is absolutely vital."

Right: Champion reporter Danielle Thompson with some of the staff's donations to the Southport Foodbank Christmas appeal

Care trust in UK's top employers for diversity

LANCASHIRE NHS Foundation Trust has been listed among the country's top employers for diversity and inclusiveness in the workplace for the second year in a row.

The trust has moved up 25 places to be ranked 24 in 'The Inclusive Top 50 UK Employers' recognised for their outstanding efforts and commitment to attracting and retaining a truly diverse workforce.

Compiled by a dedicated panel of judges, the list is collated based on organisations' performance on a range of areas within the diversity arena, including recruitment procedures, training and other related initiatives.

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Don't pay for something you no longer need!

Charity offers advice on how to get out of those unwanted subscriptions

CITIZENS Advice Lancashire West is warning about the dangers of getting stuck with subscriptions to services or goods you no longer want or need.

New research has revealed that people are wasting hundreds of pounds on unwanted subscriptions.

Analysis of 500 cases reported to the Citizens Advice consumer service between June and August 2017 found that people 'lost' an average of £160 paying subscriptions they wanted to cancel but weren't able to.

Now Citizens Advice Lancashire West is offering tips on how to avoid getting tied into a subscription.

Analysis from national Citizens Advice reveals that companies can make it hard to cancel a subscription with nine in 10 people prevented from doing so after initially asking.

Common reasons for turning down a cancellation include being told to use a specific method, like the phone, or to give more than a month's notice.

People also reported not being made aware they had signed up for a subscription in the first place, or that their contract would automatically be renewed.

With subscriptions now being offered across a range of goods and services, from beauty products to TV streaming, Citizens Advice Lancashire West is urging people to check the small print before they sign up to one.

Under the Consumer Rights Act 2015, businesses can't enforce terms on consumers that are unfair.

Diane Gradwell chief executive of Citizens Advice Lancashire West, said: "This research shows that companies are continuing to cash in on unwanted subscriptions by blocking people's cancellation on the grounds of a technicality.

"It's important for people to read any terms and conditions before signing up to a subscription, but they should also be on the lookout for companies who are deliberately throwing obstacles in their way when they try to cancel.

"Anyone who needs advice on how to cancel a subscription, or runs into difficulty doing so, should contact us for further help."

Pals make strides to moon walk fundraising target in aid of breast cancer charities

A WEST Lancashire woman and her friend who are planning to do a marathon 'moon walk' in aid of breast cancer charities next year made a good start to their fundraising by helping to run Parbold's Flea Market.

Gail Shackley from Parbold and her friend Laura Rothwell, a breast cancer survivor, will be joining three other friends to take part in a Moon Walk in Iceland in June next year organised by the Walk The Walk charity.

Calling themselves the Boob City Strollers due to their shared love for the Bay City Rollers, Gail and Laura have to pay for their all of their own expenses and raise a minimum of £500 each before they can take part.

They set the ball rolling at the flea market by working in the kitchen, being in charge of the door and having a stall of their own, along with a raffle and tombola.

Gail said: "The day went really well and we raised £553.48! We had lots of help on the day from our hubbies, from friends in the village and two friends who have walked with us on previous walks, Janette McMylor and Audrey Robertson."

Gail and Laura making biscuits to sell at the Parbold Flea Market.

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The launch of Lancashire Police's Christmas drink and drug driving campaign featured a stark reminder of the possible consequences of driving under the influence - take a taxi or face ending the night in a police car, ambulance or even a hearse!

Police launch campaign highlighting dangers of drink and drug-driving

Report by **Henry James**

LANCASHIRE Police have launched a campaign, in conjunction with Lancashire Road Safety Partnership, aimed at educating motorists about the dangers of drinking and taking drugs before driving.

The theme of the campaign, 'Which direction will you take?', features a photo of a hearse, police car, ambulance and taxi to remind revellers of the possible consequences of their decisions when going out.

Inspector Andy Trotter said: "If you're out partying this Christmas then please plan ahead and book a taxi, check public transport times or don't drink.

"If you know of someone who is driving under the influence of drink or drugs then please do the right thing and call us on 101 or Crimestoppers anonymously before they kill themselves or somebody else.

"Nobody wants to end up in a police car, ambulance, or in the worst instance, a hearse."

Lancashire sector manager at the North West Ambulance Service, Dave Rigby, added: "Ambulance staff see first-hand the devastating impact of serious road traffic collisions and the life-changing injuries, not only for the victims, their family and friends, but also other road users and pedestrians.

Responsibilities

"People should understand the benefits of safe driving and that they have a responsibility as both a driver and a passenger to help prevent more tragedy on our roads."

Rhiannon Leeds, Lancashire Road Safety Partnership co-ordinator, commented: "We know that driving under the influence of drink or drugs is still an issue, particularly at this time of year. We hope by reminding people of their responsibilities to themselves and others we will reduce the number of people involved in collisions on Lancashire's roads this festive season."

And Lancashire's Police and Crime Commissioner, Clive Grunshaw, said: "Christmas and the holidays are a time for people getting together and enjoying themselves, but the message is clear, don't let drink or drug driving ruin your life or anyone else's.

"Anyone prepared to drive with drink or drugs in their system must prepare to face the consequences, with those making the choice to get behind the wheel while over the limit at night, or even the morning after, putting themselves and everyone around them in danger.

"The launch of this year's campaign highlights that drink and drug driving will not be tolerated and the police will be out and about carrying out targeted checks to keep our roads safe."

NEW DIRECTIONS

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Ten years after being created as the first local authority social care trading company in the country, Sefton New Directions remains at the forefront of the care sector in the borough and beyond.

A team of more than 300 enthusiastic and caring staff provide a wide range of high-quality services for several thousand residents across the area.

Service users include people with age-related conditions, learning disabilities, autistic spectrum disorders, mental health support needs and physical disabilities.

New Directions staff enable clients to get the best out of life, and the success of their approach is evident from the many positive reports the organisation has received from the Care Quality Commission.

Many New Directions service users learn useful life and vocational skills, including horticulture, joinery, sewing and dressmaking and catering and hospitality at various New Directions creative workshops in the area.

Equally importantly, the organisation provides more than 150,000 hours of care for people at home each year.

A key feature of this service is the emphasis on reablement and rehabilitation support, helping clients to return home from hospital quickly, avoid readmission and live independently for as long as possible.

New Directions also offers a day service for older people at a number of locations across Sefton, including those with the early stages of dementia.

Staff encourage service users to get involved in a broad range of activities, from chair-based exercise and entertainment to reminiscence sessions and social outings.

The New Directions team also provides a specialist day service for residents with more advanced dementia, helping them to live fulfilling lives both at home and in the community.

New Directions Business Development Manager, Dave Hughes, commented: "Our commitment is to provide personalised care where and when it's needed.

"As part of this process, we work closely with commissioners to constantly review, develop and improve our services to ensure that they provide the support and life-enriching opportunities that our clients and their families want and deserve."

For more information about Sefton New Directions ring 0151 934 2572, email info-ND@ndirections.co.uk or visit www.ndirections.co.uk.

The very successful New Direction drama group, New Centre Stage, at a recent concert

New directions

Supporting the most vulnerable

We Are Here For You

We provide support for adults with age related needs including dementia and other adults with disabilities or a mental health problem

Arrange a free consultation today and see how we can help you or your loved ones.

See our website for full detail of all the services we offer.

www.ndirections.co.uk

Or call Dave Hughes on 0151 934 2572 or email: dave.hughes@ndirections.org, quoting reference: CMG2017

Sefton New Directions, 3rd Floor, Investment Centre, 375 Stanley Road, Bootle L20 3EF

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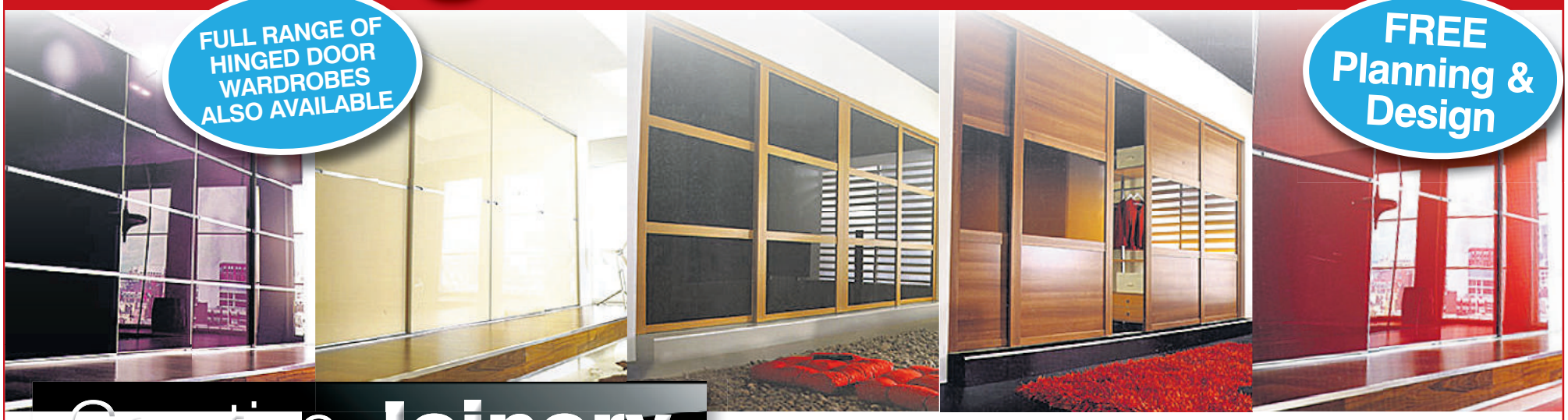

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Bus strikes have given me a new appreciation of public transport

IT'S taken a series of bus strikes to make me realise just how good - and robust - our public transport system is. At least, in my neck of the woods.

I'm not going to take sides in the Arriva bus drivers' dispute, I know too little about it. But around where I live in Maghull, Arriva provides the vast majority of the bus services to places people want or need to go. If I want to go to Southport, Ormskirk, Bootle Strand or Liverpool city centre by public transport, my first, and until now I would have said only, choice would be an Arriva bus.

Of course, there is also the train, but Maghull station is a good 20-minute walk away, and there are the Merseytravel-sponsored 'circular' buses as long as you don't mind a magical mystery tour of the town while you're at it.

What I have discovered though is that there are ways around these problems that really don't take that much longer than the bus services they replace. And even more surprising (for me) is that chatting to fellow travellers, they too have worked out the same alternatives, the difference being that none of them would lay claim to being public transport buffs as I suppose I do.

Take, for instance, my usual twice-weekly trips to Champion Towers in Southport. Normally this is something like a 45-minute bus ride each way. Since I am a 'Twirly' (pensioner-speak for travel pass holder) the journey must start after 9.30am on weekdays. So I usually arrive at the office at something like 10.45am with a start from home at about 9.45 using the direct Arriva bus service 300.

Now one of my Southport days is Monday and Mondays have been a favoured target for the one-day strikes. But with a little thought, I realised that by catching the Merseytravel bus to Waterloo interchange and then the train to Southport, I could get to the office only minutes later than normal, albeit having to start out perhaps 25 minutes earlier.

The same ploy, if I don't want the circular bus ride or walk to the station, applies, ditto Bootle Strand. In fact, the only slightly awkward journey is to Ormskirk because it involves either a time-consuming walk or tour of Maghull bus ride. Even so, it's still a perfectly feasible way of getting there.

Mind you, before I get carried away with all this inventiveness, the planned four-day Arriva drivers' disruption immediately before Christmas is going to throw at least a small spanner into the works of my usual Christmas plans.

Yes, it can almost be fun trying to plan alternative ways of getting from A to B without having to travel to Z to achieve it - particularly when you can compare notes with others at unusual bus stops. And yes, to a large extent the present bus troubles have shown that around here at least there are ways around the lack of my usual Arriva buses.

Trouble is of course that the fun would probably wear off if this series of strikes continues, and the alternative routes begin to seem not so much a clever adventure as a time-consuming chore.

I realise too that there must be parts of the area which do not have the scope for ingenious alternative routes, and no bus means no-go to folk without the use of a car - often either the elderly or young mums with kiddies.

Which is why one of my Christmas wishes this year will be for a amicable end to the Arriva bus dispute - and, who knows, maybe a minor Christmas miracle of a settlement before December 24?

Personally, I have always had a high regard for the skill of bus drivers, and (with a few exceptions) their ability to put up with the vagaries of passengers, often with a good humour which can make all the difference to how a day begins or ends.

So whether I am on an Arriva 300 bus, or a train from Waterloo on Christmas Eve, I wish them a very Happy Christmas.

Residents of Mart Lane and office staff from Martland Mill after the Christmas tree lights switch-on event.

Business centre gets into the Christmas spirit - at the double!

EMPLOYEES and local residents gathered at the Martland Mill business centre in Burscough to celebrate the switching on of lights on two Christmas trees with mulled wine, Prosecco, mince pies and chocolates!

The trees were paid for by Martland Mill owner, Andy MacGregor, while Jackie Maguire, Burscough Parish Council clerk, was given the honour of switching on the lights.

Sue Smith, lead receptionist at the centre which is home to 24 independent businesses, said: "The Christmas tree lights switch-on went very well and was a great success, truly bringing the festivities of Christmas to Burscough.

"This is the first time we have hosted this event but we will definitely be doing it again next year.

"The Christmas community spirit is off to a great start in Burscough!"

WINTER SALE

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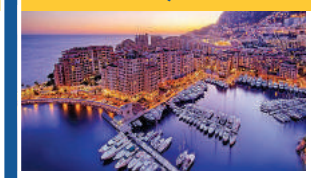

Departing 18th May 2018, 16 nights
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Prices from only £1,999pp
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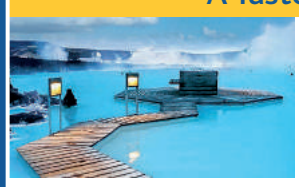
Lochs of Scotland

Departing 11th June 2018, 7 nights
Explore Scotland's Viking history and be in awe of its beautifully rugged landscapes. You'll see the hidden gems and view the country in a whole new light.
Prices from only £1,099pp
FREE all-inclusive drinks upgrade
OR FREE tour credit

Fjords, Mountains and Glaciers

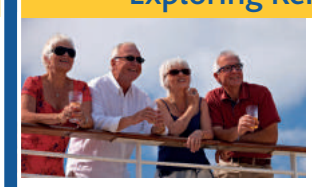
Departing 3rd June 2018, 8 nights
Journey to the beautiful and majestic fjordland of Norway. Visit the quaint town encompassed by snow-capped mountains and wondrous waterfalls.
Prices from only £1,299pp
FREE all-inclusive drinks upgrade
OR FREE tour credit

A Taste of Iceland



Departing 18th June 2018, 9 nights
Explore Iceland's land of Fire and Ice. Its rugged landscape, thunderous waterfalls and geothermal activity will leave you wanting to discover more.
Prices from only £1,399pp
FREE all-inclusive drinks upgrade
OR FREE tour credit

Exploring Remote Spitsbergen



Departing 27th June 2018, 15 nights
Discover the stunning scenery and historic towns of Norway as you travel along its coast to Spitsbergen and the fantastic Northern Lights show.
Prices from only £2,399pp
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GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH

www.gracebaptist.org.uk

Sunday 17 December, 10.30am
All Age Carol Service
Followed by mince pies and hot drinks

Sunday 17 December, 6.15pm
Traditional Carol Service
With Carols and Bible readings from the Christmas story
Followed by mince pies and hot drinks

Christmas Eve, 11.15pm
Carols 'til Midnight

Christmas Day, 11.00am
Christmas Morning Service

Grace Baptist Church, Princes Street, Southport, PR8 1EG

info@gracebaptist.org.uk

St Peter's Church
St Peter's Rd, Birkdale

Christmas Service

Sunday 17th December
6pm : Carol Service
Christmas Eve
4:00pm : Christingle
11.30pm : First Communion of Christmas
Christmas Day
10:00am Family Communion
ALL WELCOME

Church Services in Southport

All Saints Church
Rawlinson Road, Southport

Christmas Eve 24th December
10am Morning Worship and Carols
Christmas Day 25th December
10am Holy Communion with Carols
New Years Eve 31st December
10am Holy Communion with Archdeacon Pete Spiers
January 7th
Epithany Carol Service
ALL WELCOME

St Lukes Church.
St Lukes Road, Southport

Christmas Eve 24th December
7pm First Mass of Christmas with blessing of Crib & Christingle.
Christmas Day 25th December
Mass with carols at 10.30am
New Years Day 1st January
Mass with carols at 10.30am
www.sluke.co.uk.
ALL WELCOME

St Philip & St Paul with Wesley
Scarisbrick New Road, Southport

Christmas Services

Sunday 17th December 4pm Carols by Candlelight
Thursday 21st December 6pm til 8.15pm
Sacred Space - time of silence in the Church lit by candlelight. Come for as long or as little as you like.
Sunday 24th December
4pm Christingle Service for all the family
11.30pm Midnight Communion
Monday 25th December
8.30am Holy Communion **10.30pm** Christmas Day Worship
ALL WELCOME
www.stphilipandstpaulwithwesley.org.uk

Christmas for all the family
at Scarisbrick New Road Baptist Church

Sunday 17th December: 10.30am
Family Christmas Service
(bringing gifts for mayors charity & foodbank including communion)

Sunday 24th December: 06.30pm
Family Christmas Service
nine lessons & carols by candlelight including communion

Monday 25th December: 10.30am
Christmas Day Celebration

ALL ARE WELCOME TO JOIN US

Church Services

Marshside Rd Methodist Church

December 16th 4pm-6pm
Christmas Messy Church
December 17th 10.30am
Nativity Church
December 19th 7pm
Rotary Carol Service
December 23rd 4pm
Traditional carol Service
Christmas Eve December 24th 10.30am
Communion Service
Christmas Day December 25th 11am
Christmas Day Service

Crossens Methodist

December 17th 6.30pm
Carol Service
December 20th 6pm
Wednesday Community Carols round the Christmas tree with Marshside Brass Band
December 25th 9.30am
Christmas Day Lead by Jan Fraser

Everyone welcome
Come and join the celebrations!

Christmas Services
At Victoria Methodist Church • 197 Sussex Road, Southport

Sunday December 17th - 10.45am
Nativity & Christmas Tree Gift Service
Gifts of shopping vouchers would be gratefully received on behalf of the Southport Soup Kitchen
Tuesday December 19th - 5.30pm
Messy Church
For children and their carers to make, eat and celebrate The Christmas story together
Sunday December 24th - 10.45am
Carol Service
Monday December 25th - 10am
Christmas Day
Come and join the celebration!
WE WISH YOU A HAPPY CHRISTMAS
www.victoriamethodistchurch.org.uk

St Francis of Assisi
68 Folkstone Road, Southport

Sunday 17th December
4pm Carol Service by candlelight
Christmas Eve
11pm Holy Communion for Christmas
Christmas Day
9am Holy Communion
ALL WELCOME

Birkdale United Reformed Church
Grosvenor Road, Southport

Christmas Services

Carols by Candlelight
6:00pm on 17th December
Midnight Communion
11:30pm on 24th December led by Rev. J. Calderley
Christmas Day Service
10:00am on 25th December led by Rev. P. Pells

Ainsdale Evangelical Church

Christmas Service
Sunday 17th December 10.30am
• Childrens activities and stories
• Carols • Scripture readings
• Short preaching session for adults

Come and join us for a happy family service with the vital truth of the Christian Gospel message

Waca Recreation Centre
Orchard Lane PR8 3RG

Holy Family RC Church
1 Brompton Rd, Southport

Christmas Services

Sunday 17th December
1.30pm - Christmas Fair • 3pm - Carol Concert
24th December Christmas Eve
7pm - Childrens Mass • 10pm Mass
25th December Christmas Day
10.30am - Family Mass
ALL WELCOME

Lord Street West, United Church
Lord Street West, Southport

Sunday 17th December 10.45am
Carol Service with Christmas music from the choir
Sunday 24th December 10.45am
Sunday Worship
Sunday 24th December 11.30pm
Christmas Eve Communion Service
Monday 25th December 10am
Family Worship for Christmas Day
Sunday 31st December 10.45am
Sunday Worship
Sunday 7th January 10.45am
Worship including Methodist Covenant Service & Holy Communion
ALL WELCOME

Church Services in Ormskirk and Skelmersdale

St Michael's Church, Dalton

Higher Lane, Dalton WN8 7RP

SUNDAY 17TH DECEMBER
4pm • Christmas Carol Service

CHRISTMAS EVE
6pm • Christingle Service
10pm • First Eucharist of Christmas

CHRISTMAS DAY
11am • Celebration Eucharist
A celebration for all the family

SUNDAY 31ST DECEMBER 2017
11am • Sung Eucharist

CHRISTMAS SERVICES ORMSKIRK PARISH CHURCH

New Church House, Church Street, Ormskirk L39 3AJ

Dec 17th 6:30pm Carols by Candlelight
Christmas Eve 24th Dec
10:30am Service • 6pm Nativity
11:30pm Holy Communion
Christmas Day 25th Dec
10:30am Family Holy Communion
Dec 31st
10:30am Service

CHRISTMAS SERVICES LATHOM PARK CHAPEL

Hall Lane, Lathom L40 5UG

Dec 17th 4:00pm: Carols by Candlelight
Dec 25th 10:30am Family Holy Communion
Dec 31st 11:00am BCP Holy Communion

Aughton Park Baptist Church

Long Lane, Aughton, Ormskirk L39 5BZ

Christmas Service

Friday 15th December
Carol Service 7:30pm

Christmas Holiday Bible Club
Tuesday 19th December 5:30pm - 7pm
(aged 4-11)

Christmas Eve Service
Sunday 24th December 11am & 4pm

Christmas Day Service
10:45am

"You shall call His name Jesus for he will save His people from their sins" Matthew 1:21

www.aughtonparkbaptistchurch.org

Skelmersdale Baptist Church

Celebrate Christmas 2017

17 DECEMBER, CAROL SERVICE – 11.00am
CHRISTMAS EVE, MORNING SERVICE – 11.00am
CHRISTMAS EVE, CANDLELIGHT SERVICE – 6.00pm
CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE – 10.00am

All welcome

Skelmersdale Baptist Church,
43 Flimby, Birchgreen, WN8 6PD
T: 07580 163959 | www.skembaptist.co.uk.

St Michael's Church, Aughton

SUNDAY 17TH DECEMBER
10.30am **Christingle**
An opportunity to raise funds for the Children's Society, while lighting our Christingles to remind us of Christ bringing his light into the world. If you have a Christmas Jumper, you are welcome to wear it!

SUNDAY 17TH DECEMBER
4pm **Lesson and Carols**
We sing traditional carols while listening to the story of Christmas told by bible readings.

CHRISTMAS EVE
4pm **Crib Service**
A wonderful service for children of all ages. Make this service part of your family tradition before returning home to hang the stockings!

CHRISTMAS EVE
11.30am **Midnight Communion**
A mystical time when we welcome the Christ Child and Christmas Begins

CHRISTMAS DAY
8.15am **Holy Communion**
Traditional said Communion

CHRISTMAS DAY
10.30am **Christmas Family Communion**
The most anticipated of days, we celebrate by singing carols. Children are invited to bring one of their new toys to show

Telephone: 01695 424457

Join us this Christmas

17th December
All Age Nativity Service 11am
Christmas Carols 7pm

24th December
Christingle 4pm
Christmas Communion 11pm

25th December
All Age Celebration 10am

31st December
All Age Communion 10am

St John the Baptist Church
School Lane, Burscough L40 4LQ
www.stjohns-burscough.org

To advertise please call 01704 392392

Blundellsands, Crosby, Aintree and Maghull

Aintree Mission Community Church

Christmas Services

Sunday 17th Dec 6.00pm
Carol Service for an hour followed by mince pies, tea & coffee. (With Community Choir)
Sunday 24th Dec. 10.30am
Christmas Sunday Service
A warm welcome to all at
105 Greenwich Rd. L9 0JJ

Join us at St Helen's Church

112 Alexandra Road, Crosby

Friday 15th December at 7.30pm
Carol Service with
Liverpool Male Voice Choir
Tickets £6 includes refreshments in aid of SPUC

Sunday 24th Christmas Eve
Mass at 8.30 pm

Monday 25th Christmas Day
Mass at 9.45 am

Maghull Baptist Church

Hall Lane, Maghull

Christmas Services

Saturday 16th December 4pm
Carols at the Alt Pub on Northway
(In conjunction with Maghull Churches)
Sunday 17th December 10.30am
Children's Nativity Service
Sunday 17th December 4pm
Carol Service
Sunday 24th December 10.30am
Christmas Reflections Service
Monday 25th December 10.30am
Christmas Morning Service

St Andrews Church, Maghull

Sunday 17th December
8.15am BCP Holy Communion
10.00am Livewires Nativity
6.30pm Service of Nine Lessons & Carols
Sunday 24th December
8.15am No Service
10.00am No Service
4pm Christingle Service
11.30pm Holy Communion
Christmas Day 25th December
8.15am BCP Holy Communion
10.00am Christmas Morning Service
ALL WELCOME

St Michael's Church

Dowhills Rd, Blundellsands

Monday 18th Dec, 6pm to 8pm: ***Community Carols***
Drop in for a sing-along and a mince pie!

Friday 22nd Dec, 4pm: ***Carols by Candlelight***
Come and sing your Christmas favourites.

Sunday 24th December, 4pm: ***Christmas Eve Crib Service***
...for all the family...

Christmas Day, 11am: ***Service of Holy Communion***
Celebrate the birth of Christ and the joy He's brought to the world.

Sunday 31st December, 10.30am: ***Covenant Renewal Service***
A service to look back on 2017 and to look with hope to the future.

Sunday 7th January, 10.30am: ***Epiphany***
Jesus Christ is revealed to the world.

Sunday 14th January, 10.30am: ***Christingle Service***
Bring your children to celebrate God's love throughout time and Christ's light in the world.

Saint's day with a Scottish flavour

PUPILS at Bickerstaffe CE Primary School celebrated St Andrew's Day (November 30), by learning more about Scotland to develop their understanding of other countries and their traditions.

After going for their daily run - with Rob Blackmore, Pipe Major with the Liverpool Clan Wallace Pipe Band, playing bagpipes in the background - the children enjoyed some porridge to warm themselves up.

Throughout the day they also enjoyed a range of Scottish-themed activities rounded off with Irn Bru and shortbread while guests who attended the school's communion service enjoyed a 'wee dram'!

All invited to church Christmas services

HOLY Trinity Church, Church Road, Bickerstaffe has announced details of its family services over Christmas to which all are invited.

A carol service featuring the 'nine lessons' will be held on Sunday, December 17 starting at 6.30pm.

And on Christmas Eve, Sunday, December 24 from 4pm there will be a 'Crib Service' for children of all ages; while Midnight Communion will begin at 11.30pm.

On Christmas Day, there will be a Family Communion service at 10.45am with carol singing and children are invited to bring a toy.

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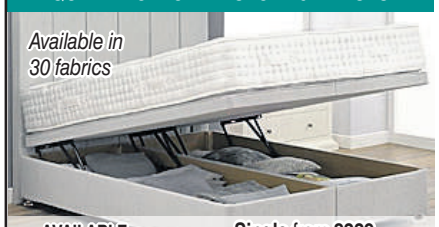

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Quality Hardwood Shaker Bedstead complete with Luxury Deep Mattress
(Available in white or oak)
DOUBLE WAS ~~£599~~
EVENT PRICE £399
KINGSIZE WAS ~~£649~~
EVENT PRICE £449

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15 MODELS ON DISPLAY
VAT exempt beds for registered disabled or on medical grounds

All sizes available in pocket sprung, with deep bases on legs. Available with drawers, massage units, infra red remote control, power lifted, with memory foam, reflex and memory foam without springs. Delivered and assembled FREE!
FULL RANGE ON DISPLAY FROM
£599 - £1999

MEDIUM/FIRM HAND TUFTED TURNABLE

Mattress complete with 2 drawer base and matching headboard (Available in 20 fabrics)

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4ft, 3/4 & DOUBLE WAS ~~£449~~ EVENT PRICE £299
KINGSIZE WAS ~~£499~~ EVENT PRICE £349

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Bedside Cabinets from £119
4 Drawer Chests from £299
Double Wardrobes from £449

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3-Drawer Bedside Cabinets £179
4 Drawer Chests £449
Double Wardrobes from £599

HAND TUFTED NO TURN 1000 POCKET SPRUNG

Mattress with memory foam complete with 2 drawer base

DOUBLE WAS ~~£649~~ EVENT PRICE £399
KINGSIZE WAS ~~£699~~ EVENT PRICE £449

QUALITY HAND TUFTED 1500 POCKET SPRUNG

Hand made turnable summer and winter mattress with memory foam and natural upholstery, complete with 2 drawer base in 20 fabrics

DOUBLE WAS ~~£899~~ EVENT PRICE £549
KINGSIZE WAS ~~£949~~ EVENT PRICE £599

TOP OF THE RANGE

Hand tufted 2000 pocket sprung hand made turnable summer and winter mattress with memory foam and natural cashmere upholstery complete with 2 drawer base in 20 fabrics

DOUBLE WAS ~~£999~~ EVENT PRICE £649
KINGSIZE WAS ~~£1049~~ EVENT PRICE £699

SPECIALIST IN LUXURY HANDMADE NATURAL POCKET SPRUNG BEDS

Sleepeezee
1400 pocket sprung Turnable medium mattress upholstered with natural cotton and wool. Complete with 2 drawer base

DOUBLE WAS ~~£949~~ EVENT PRICE £599
KINGSIZE WAS ~~£1049~~ EVENT PRICE £699

Harrison
Top hand made luxury 4200 pocket sprung all natural cotton and wool mattress complete with base and 2 free drawers - Available in gentle, firm or medium

DOUBLE WAS ~~£1379~~ EVENT PRICE £899
KINGSIZE WAS ~~£1579~~ EVENT PRICE £999

Harrison
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OLD BED RECYCLING SERVICE

Reminder that a dog is for life not just for Christmas!

Council advice for anyone planning to give a four-legged friend as a gift

ANYONE thinking of buying a dog at Christmas, either for themselves or as a gift, is being reminded of the responsibilities that come with being a pet owner.

The prospect of waking up on Christmas morning to a cuddly, fluffy or playful puppy can be an attractive thought, but West Lancs Council is keen to remind residents in the borough that a dog is for life not just for Christmas.

Cllr. Kevin Wright

Councillor Kevin Wright, the council's portfolio holder for health and community safety, said: "People should remember a dog is for life, not just for Christmas, and by law they must be responsible dog owners. If people follow our advice their pet will be a friend for life, and not just a novelty gift."

Dog ownership can be expensive and a new pet could live for 15 years or more. Costs include food, insurance, toys, a collar with tag, a lead, and training classes, as well as the initial cost of the pet.

Dog owners should consider the amount of time they will need to leave a dog on its own as some breeds and age groups would cope better with this than others.

Dogs also need to be safe and well-behaved with people and other animals and owners should look into training their pooch.

All dogs should have a balanced diet and access to water at all times. Veterinary care is essential, including vaccinations and flea treatments. Owners should groom, and check pets' teeth, ears and nails on a regular basis.

Dogs also need time and attention. Some breeds will need more mental stimulation and exercise than others, or they may become destructive.

By law, owners must keep their dog under control at all times and prevent it from being a nuisance to others. A dog must be clearly identified, wearing a collar and tag with the name and address of its owner, and since April 2016 it has been law to have your dog microchipped.

People thinking about buying a dog should consider which - if any - suits their family and lifestyle. They should ask friends about their dogs, and find out more about breeds they like.

Neutering a dog can have health, financial and behavioural benefits. Unneutered dogs can display unwanted sexual behaviour and aggression. Neutering could encourage calmer, more predictable behaviour making for a more suitable family pet.

Those considering buying a pedigree dog should only go to a reputable, licensed breeder and avoid puppy farms and backyard breeders. Visit www.rspca.org.uk for more information.

For more information about the council's responsibilities with regard to dogs visit www.westlancs.gov.uk/dogs.

Carols by candlight

CHRIST Church, Douglas-in-Parbold, will host a carols by candlelight service on Sunday, December 17.

Starting at 6pm, the hour-long service at the church on Parbold Hill will consist of the traditional 'nine lessons' and will be part community choir and part congregational.

All are welcome to attend.

Plans to convert former post office into restaurant

A LOCAL property developer is planning to convert Ormskirk's former Post Office premises into a restaurant.

The Vici Property Group Limited, based on St Michael Road, Aughton, has made an application to West Lancs Boorugh Council as to whether prior approval for the conversion is required.

The post office on Aughton Street closed in February and moved into WH Smith's store on Moor Street, Ormskirk.

The decision has been delegated to the Director of Development and Regeneration, John Harrison for determination.

Residents have until January 18 to make comments which can be made throughWest Lancs council's website www.westlancs.gov.uk/planning using reference2017/1191/PNC.

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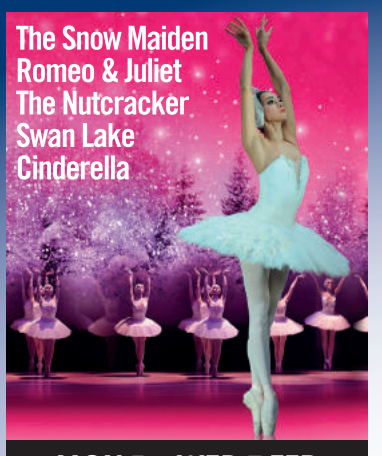
IDEAL CHRISTMAS GIFT

SUN 4 FEB



MON 5 – WED 7 FEB

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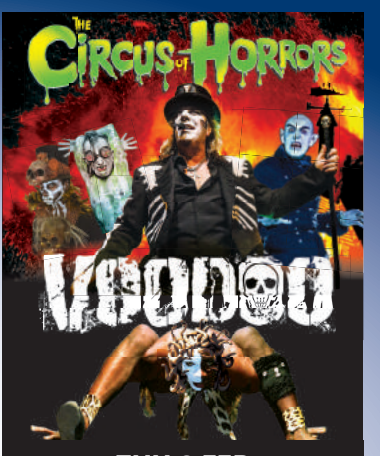
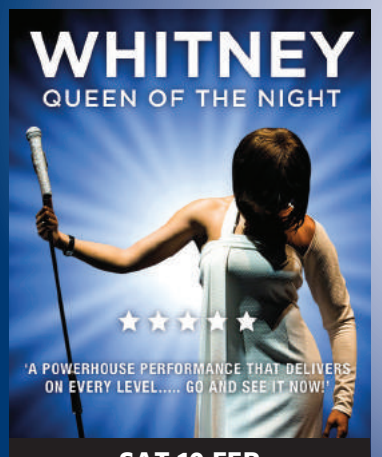
SPECIAL EVENTS COMING SOON



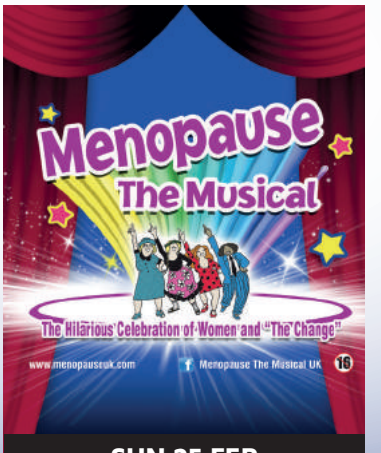
THU 8 FEB

FRI 9 FEB



SAT 10 FEB

SUN 11 FEB



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Latest exhibition unveiled at centre

THE LATEST exhibition has been unveiled at WWT Martin Mere Wetland Centre by David Secrett: A Poet's View of Rural Beauty

The exhibition, running until January 20 2018 is focused on landscapes.

As a professional trained artist, David's view of the natural world and its 'poetry' results in works of originality.

After his foundation studies and training in art and design he spent 26 years teaching.

Following a successful seven year term at Cedar Farm Galleries in Lancashire, he continues to work as a full time artist from a private studio in Parbold.

Find out more about joining or visiting Martin Mere at www.secretartwork.co.uk or email: secretartwork@hotmail.com.

The exhibition is located in the main foyer and a percentage of all sales comes straight to Martin Mere.

WWT Martin Mere Wetland Centre is open every day (except Christmas Day) from 9.30am to 4.30pm during winter months and parking is free of charge. Situated off the A59, it is signposted from the M61, M58 and M6.

The centre is also accessible via the Southport to Manchester and the Liverpool to Preston lines by train from Burscough Rail Stations.

Robin Redbreast by David Secrett

Rehearsals for Peter Pan

The Voice star to play Prince Charming

TOM Milner, most recently seen on The Voice, will be taking on the role of Prince Charming in Cinderella this Christmas at Southport Theatre.

On The Voice Tom was selected for Team Ricky before even reaching the chorus of Wait on Me in his blind audition and he says of his experience on the BBC talent show: "The Voice was great experience!

"People would pay a lot of money to get advice from four top professionals in Will.I am, Boy George, Paloma Faith and Rick (Ricky Wilson) - and I got it for free! More importantly I met some friends for life from the show and I've done some collaborations with a couple since."

Tom has also appeared on our screens in Waterloo Road, Holby City, Barking and Doctors.

This will be Tom's second pantomime with producers Imagine Theatre and, like many performers, he has fond memories of pantomime from his childhood.

"I always remember watching Frank Bruno in a panto and my older brother got up on stage at the end of the show. I was gutted as I was too young!"

"Doing panto always makes Christmas feel that extra bit special. They're filled with fun for everyone of all ages too, so the whole family can enjoy them together. I do love TV because you get to go again if you go wrong! However treading the boards and having a live audience to bounce off wins hands down!"

"This will be my first appearance at Southport Theatre and I can't wait - although I've heard it's pretty cold so I'll have to dig out the Parka coat and dress as an Eskimo during the period!"

"I am looking forward to working with everyone on the show. I've had friends who have worked with Sam Kane before and can't speak highly enough of him.... NO pressure Sam!"

Cinderella opens this Friday (December 15) and runs until Saturday, January 6.

Win family tickets to swashbuckling show

THE sky's the limit this Christmas, as with a sprinkling of fairy dust, Blackpool Opera House takes people on a magical journey to Neverland in the sensational, swashbuckling musical adventure – Peter Pan, from Saturday, December 16 to Sunday, January 07 – and the Champion has eight family tickets for the show to give away.

TV star Jennifer Ellison will lead the cast of this dazzling family production as Captain Hook alongside X Factor's Jake Quickenden in the title role. They will be joined on stage by Radio Wave's Breakfast Show fave Scott Gallagher as hapless sidekick Smee and Blackpool's own Maureen Nolan as Mrs Darling.

Join the boy who never grew up, along with Wendy, John and Michael, as they take on the villainous Captain Hook and her band of merry pirates in the ultimate battle for Neverland. With a feisty fairy, a group of lost boys and hits such as Our House, Can't Stop The Feeling and a mix of festive favourites – this is the perfect adventure for the whole family to enjoy this Christmas.

Peter Pan is produced by the Selladoor Family, producer of mid and large-scale family productions including The Quite Remarkable Adventures of the Owl and the Pussycat, James and the Giant Peach, Guess How Much I Love You, The Broons and the current UK tour of Flashdance.

Just answer the question below to enter:

- What is the name of Peter Pan's faithful fairy friend?

A: Sweat Pea
B: Periwinkle
C: Tinkerbell

Answers to henry.james@champnews.com by this Friday (December 15) at 12 noon. Tickets must be taken on Tuesday, December 19 at 7pm. Please supply your address and daytime contact number with your entry.

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SDC putting on 'geni-ous' panto

SOUTHPORT Dramatic Club's "most Spectacular Family Pantomime" opens on Wednesday, December 20 2017 and runs until January 7 2018.

There are no performances on Dec 24 to 26 and Jan 2 and 3.

This year it is to be Aladdin, bursting with stunning scenery, colourful costumes, spectacular singing and dazzling dancing and directed by the Panto King, Arnold Gorse.

James Henderson heads a large, star-studded cast as Aladdin with Nathan Colman the panto dame, Widow Twankey, Peter Slater as Abanazer and Helen Pickavance as Empress Dragonara.

The Box Office is open daily (except Sunday) from 11am to 2.30pm and from two hours before each show. Tel. 01704 530521/530460.

The show starts at 7.30pm each evening except for the following dates: Sat, Dec 23 1pm and 5.15 pm; Wed Dec 27 1pm and 5.15pm; Sat Dec 30 2.30pm and 7.30pm; Sun Dec 31 1pm; Mon Jan 1 5.15pm; and Sat Jan 6 2.30pm and 7.30pm.

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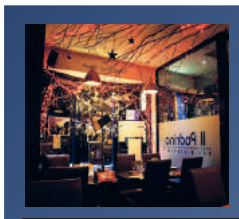

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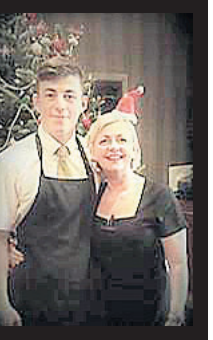

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25TH DECEMBER Fully booked
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WOOL COAT Below knee black size 8/10. No offers buyer collects £7. Black wool coat below knee length size 12. No offers £7. Buyer to collect. Old Skem 01695 721766

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LADIES DRESS AND JACKET Fully beaded black edge to edge jacket and dress, size 16. Jacket has long sleeves and both only been worn once.Can email photograph. £18.00. 07387439004

LADIES DRESS New Per-Una dress which still has shop labels on, black and white in colour, size 10 to 12. Cost new £65.00. Also three more Per-Una dresses for sale. £25.00 07387439004

CHILD'S BOOTS New, size 12 Snow Fun Boots, grey and black in colour, with fur around the tops, zips to fronts. Never worn and still with labels on. £5.00 07387439004

GIFT JIGSAW Deluxe, Waddingtons Limited edition, beautiful Twelve Days of Christmas jigsaw. Great condition. 1000 pieces. Can send e-mail pic. £14 01704 551398

FOOTBALL BOOKS The Crazy World of Football, England's Worst Footballers, Football's Strangest Matches. As new. E-mail pic available. £5 each 01704 551398

COMPUTING

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EPSON INKS Genuine four colour multi pack. Orange symbol. £12.00 only. Bought in error. 01704 537565

PS4 500GB Black, new unopened present, with 1 controller. Grab a Christmas bargain. £150 07717795599

IPHONE SE Brand new, unwanted upgrade, silver white, 32GB, unlocked, original box etc, bargain £300 01704831977

DVD/CD DRIVE Desktop Freecom Classic DVD/CD drive suitable for reading and writing CD's and DVD's but not Blu-ray. £10 01772 814774

PLAYSTATION 2 games bundle, mixed titles, 25 in total. All tested working. Bargain the lot only £25. Call after 6 please 07960 357719

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DELL 755 desktop pc, core2duo 2.2, 160gb, 2gb ram, genuine Windows 10, 17 monitor, keyboard, mouse, full working order £110 01704831977

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22 CHISELS For wood work, various sizes, selling the lot for £40 07590336533

CORK ROLL Full roll ideal for walls or floor also adhesive £25 077934496817

FOUR PANEL Door, white, 2.6" wide, 6.6" height £10 07934496817

DOUBLE GLAZED WINDOWS 5 brown pvc double glazed windows £70 07786298207

FENCE CREOSOTE B&Q, 4ltr, unopened, bargain only £4, pick up from aintree 01515316937

DEWALT BATTERY Charger 14 Volt model DE9118, as new, good for spare, Netherton area £15 0793411596

ROUTER TABLE Top Nutool, 18" length 13" wide with adjustable slides £20, excellent condition. 07590 336533

DEWALT 18v battery, model no. 07934, good for spare, as new, Netherton area £15 07934 115962

FIRE SURROUNDS Pine veneer fire surrounds height 1055 mm width 1105 mm mantel length 1220 mm £20 each or £90 for 5 07968914294

GARDENING

FREE FLAGS 12 x 2 x 2, very heavy 07505 400051

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WROUGHT IRON Double Gates. Each Gate 4ft 6" wide x 3ft 9" high. Good Condition. £40 (07984) 649665

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MUSIC 100 Carols for choirs. Paperback. New. £7.50. Could deliver locally. 01704 840135

CHESS SET AND BOARD Excellent condition £15 01704 214017

4 BERTH Sunncamp frame tent, FREE for collection only 07804 459112

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SCIMITAR Wheel clamp 4 caravan alloy wheels carry box with locking bolts. Cost £110 £50 ono 01704 871462

BINATONE DIGIMATIC Vintage radio alarm, brown cover flip clock AM FM £12 07704 785755

SMALL GOLFBAG Pencil bag, for child/short clubs. Black, 33 inches long. Can send pic via e-mail. £8 each 01704 551398

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MEERKAT BOOKS Brand new volume of 6 hardback cost £6 each now £18 no texts or withheld number 07504685036

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PS2 Playstation2, 13 games, 1 controller, excellent condition. £25 01515201255

IPOD SHUFFLE 1gb pink with dock wire bargain perfect order £10 07518929646

TABLE GAMES Box full of classic table games, brand new £15 01704 461083

CHIP POKER Set, Deluxe 200, locking aluminium carrying case, brand new £20 01704 461083

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MOBILE PHONE Nokkia Smartphone,touch screen,on O2 network,good camera,almost new hardly used. £45 01704 530137

NEW DVDS 3 Film DVD Box Set Steve Martin, Housesitter/Parenthood/Roxanne. New, in wrapper - £3 01704 551398

NEW CD ROY WOOD & WIZARD. The Best of and The Rest of. Brand new in wrapping - £5 01704 551398

SONY MIDI HI-FI radio, cd, tape, holds 5 CDs at once, low energy, good condition £50 07801 946884

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HOME ENTERTAINMENT

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MOBILE PHONE samsung s7 edge excellent condition inc box new unused headphones. 2 covers. 1st to see will buy £290 no offers 07743101819

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CD STORAGE UNIT Mahogany wooden rotating unit for storing CDs with 64 individual racks VGC. Size H 35 x D 30 x W 30cm £15 01704 560150

SAMSUNG DVD HD ULTRA BLU-RAY PLAYER New still boxed. £100 01704 530042

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HOUSE AND HOME

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CORNER BASIN & Stainless steel top and corner unit, white £20 07934496817

INFALLIBLE AIR BED ideal for Christmas visitors perfect condition £15 01704 807969

DEHUMIDIFIER X2. Unboxed never used. £30 each 07709627731

HOUSE AND HOME

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TELEVISION STAND Corner unit, 31" L x 19" H, dark glass £10 01704 211988

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SINGLE BED ottoman style, lots of storage, like new £70 ono 07779 536265

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GUEST BED fold-up metal frame, thick mattress as new, buyer collects £40. 0151 928 1677 079747 05334

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STEAM MOP Upright 5 in 1, brand new still in box, unused £25. 0151 9281677 or 079747 05334

DYSON Clean condition £50. No offers. Can deliver local upright excellent condition 01704 884564

DAVENPORT DESK solid mahogany, leather inlay, lovely piece of reproduction furniture, ideal present. £90 ono 0151 9281955

DINING TABLE Part drop leaf type, oak colour, good condition, with chairs,collect from aintree only £45 bargain 01515316937

ROLLER BLINDS 9 cream roller blinds with brushed steel eyelets excellent condition £40 07786298207

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HOUSE AND HOME

HIGH BED Pine 3ft single high bed with shelving, desk, seating and pull out futon. Very good condition. £100 01704 578359

WASHING MACHINE hotpoint aquarius,6kg Load,white,with water hose,good condition £45 tel. Southport 07809 255966

SINGLE BEDDING Tesco single fitted sheet and 2 pillow cases. Polycotton, Non Iron. Brand new. Deep pink. £5 01704 551398

LARGE TABLECLOTH Debenhams dark wine damask 90x72 used once £8. No withheld number or texts 07504685036

GLASS CAKE STANDS One tier unusual designs g8 for xmas parties etc £5 each no texts withheld numbers 07504685036

JURA E6 bean to cup coffee machine maker only few months old still like new cost £799 bargain NO OFFERS £300 07743101819

MICROWAVE OVEN white, manual timer,700 watts, can be seen working, can deliver £15 Southport 214498

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HOUSE AND HOME

HOTPOINT Condensing Tumble Dryer white 2 months old 8kl load like new colour clash, now spare machine £90 ono 0151 3788667

SUITE 3 and 2 seater sofas, silver grey & black crush velvet, excellent condition, 12 months old barely used £350. 0151 2818247

DINING TABLE Very nice (John Lewis) Hardly used, only 2 chairs. Ellis will sell sep extending. Buyer collects. Table £60 Chairs £15each 0151 9248114

M&S Glass coffee table & 2 lamp tables oiro £20. LGE Urn shaped vase. Aprox 23" high cream & gold edge. Cost £50 oiro£18 0151 5269866

HOTPOINT FRIDGE White under counter type, good condition, no freezer compartment, UK made,collect from aintree,only £50 01515316937

TWO SOFAS John Lewis Carla Ecru beige material 2 seater & 3 seater plus matching cushions.Very good condition. £250 01695578188

TV CABINET solid pine, stained mahogany with 2 doors and shelf inside for video, storage, etc. Good condition, Burscough, £35 01704 892452

ELECTRIC FRYING Pan/multi-cooker,brand new unused,in stainless steel,with electronic control,non stick,made by Prestige. £20 01704 530137

SINGLE BED with under bed storage via sliding doors. including chrome headboard. Sale due to house move. £50 07935641474

LARGE XMASTABLECLOTHS cotton and damask used once red-green and red £5-£8 each no withheld number or texts 07504685036

DESK/WORKSTATION IN beech wood on castors plenty of shelves and storage space on castors may deliver £30 ono 01515263851

LIGHT DRAWERS x2 oak as new, matching 2 drawers either bedside or storage. brushed chrome handles £30 for both 07860 666955

SIX CHAIRS light golden brown with dark green washable velvet seats - can sell as 2/4/6 - good condition, £10 each chair 0151 4744261

FRIDGE/FREEZER Hot point fridge freezer FSFL58W model 60/40 split, 2 years old, good condition, must be able to collect. £160 0151 5268421

SOFA M&S 3 seat sofa gold fabric traditional style has had little use so in excellent condition nice firm cushions £120 01704 549616

PLASMA TV Pioneer 43 inch. Excellent picture. No built-in Freeview. £50 07754072247

FRIDGE FREEZER white undercounter fridge freezer,4 months old from currys,85cm tall,50cm wide,top third freezer,lower 2 thirds fridge,separate doors, £65 tel southport 07809 255966

ELECTRIC FIRE Lovely regency style in polished chrome and brass,2 radiant bars,coloured glass coals,made by Imperial,-cost approx. £400,will sell for £95 01704 530137

DISPLAY UNIT Dark wood with illuminated shelves/cupboards and two drawers. 69"wide, 55"high, 15"deep. Ormskirk location. Excellent condition. £48 ono. 07855 799985

DINING CHAIRS 4 high back dining chairs upholstered in dark brown/black leather effect material. Very good condition. Pet free home. Aughton. £80 07772 757818

TOY CHEST Small toy / storage white wooden chest decorated with painted flowers curved top side metal handles. VGC. Size H 18 x W 21 x D 15 inches £30 01704 560150

CLOAKROOM TOILET SUITE Ideal Standard close couple toilet, cistern, corner washbasin and ceramic soap dish with towel ring in wispa cream. Fitted for 3 months only £75 01704 560150

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Love Deborah, Jasmine and Elliot
xxx

DEATHS

RUSSELL PETER

3rd December 2017
Peacefully at his home in Ormskirk
aged 92 years

The dearly loved Husband of the late Thelma, loving Dad of Mary, Susan and Christine, dear Father-In-Law of Keith, Paul and Peter and devoted Grandad to all his Grand and Great-Grandchildren. Funeral Service and Interment at Ormskirk Parish Church on Monday 18th December 2017 at 10:30am. Family flowers only please, donations if desired for Barnardos. All enquiries to Melanie Hardman at H Hardman & Co., Independent Family Funeral Directors of Skelmersdale, Ormskirk & Scarisbrick. Tel: 01695 722122/720012

ROBERTS CLARE

2nd December 2017

Deepest sympathy to Eric and Family on the loss of such a lovely lady.

As long as we have memories
As long as we have tears
You will always be remembered Clare

God Bless
RIP

From Sister Dorothy,Sons Frank and Family and Stephen and Family

DEATHS

STOBART PHYLLIS

After a long illness, peacefully at James Page Nursing Home on 1st December 2017
Aged 84 years

Wife of the late Norman. Much loved Mum of Penny, Richard and Hilary. Loving Nanny of Ben, Rebecca, Joanna and David. Dear Sister of Rose and Dianne. A much loved Auntie of Rachel, Michael, Jonathan and Andrea. Will be sadly missed by all of her family and friends. Funeral Service will take place at Maghull Methodist Church on 20th December 2017 at 11.00am followed by committal at West Lancs Crematorium, Burscough at 12.15pm. Family flowers only by request but the family are gratefully receiving donations for Woodlands Hospice. For further enquiries please to: The Co-operative Funeralcare, 36 Westway, Maghull, L31 0AB. Tel 0151 527 1709.

HAYES JOHN DOUGLAS

8th December 2017
Aged 70 years

Passed away peacefully after a short illness, bravely fought with dignity. Devoted Husband of Vivian, much loved Dad of Annette, Jacqui and Mark, cherished Father-in-law of Mark and Nigel, loving Pop of Frank, Henry, Phoebe, Layla and Esther, Brother to Glenda. John will be greatly missed by all his family and friends. Service at Southport Crematorium on Tuesday 19th December at 11:20am. Family flowers only please but if desired donations are being gratefully received for Queenscourt Hospice. Donations and enquiries to Howard's Funeral Directors, 1-5 Roe Lane, Southport, PR9 9DR. Telephone: 01704 500086.

PINDER ERIC

4th December 2017
Aged 88 years
Passed away peacefully at home

Devoted Husband of Olive. Much loved Dad of Eric and Bernadette. Eric will be greatly missed by all his family and friends. Service at Southport Crematorium on Monday 18th December at 12:40pm. Flowers welcome. Enquiries to Howard's Funeral Directors, 1-5 Roe Lane, Southport, PR9 9DR. Telephone: 01704 500086

DEATHS

RIMMER COLIN

Peacefully on 6th December 2017
Aged 72 years

Loving Husband to Sylvia, devoted dad to Anne, Bev and Gary. Will be greatly missed by all his Grandchildren, Sister Joan, Sister-in-law Pat and their families. Funeral service at West Lancs Crematorium on Friday 15th December at 11.30am. Family flowers only, any donations greatly received for Dementia UK. Enquiries to Hunters of Ormskirk, 128b Burscough Street, Ormskirk. Tel 01695 572997.

WRIGHT CLIFF

4th December 2017
Aged 80 years
Passed away peacefully after a sudden illness

Devoted Husband of Marlene (deceased). Father of Niall and Caroline. Grandfather to Ben and Sam. Family flowers only by request but donations if desired to The British Lung Foundation. Funeral Service will take place at Southport Crematorium on Monday 18th December 2017 at 1.20pm. All enquiries to Hunters of Ormskirk 128B Burscough Street, Ormskirk L39 2EY. Tel: 01695 572997.

DAVIES RICHARD ARTHUR

Aged 83 years
5th December 2017

Brother to the late Brian and Gerold, Brother in Law to Nora,
Much loved Uncle to all of his Nieces and Nephews, Great and Great Great Uncle.
Will be sadly missed.
Funeral Service at Burscough Crematorium on 19th December 2017 at 10.45am.
Family flowers only. Donations gratefully received for Cancer Research.

DEATHS

EDGE RAY

Passed away peacefully at home on 7th December 2017
Aged 87 years
of Southport

Dearly loved Husband of Brenda, Much loved Dad and Grandfather. Funeral Service at West Lancs Crematorium, on Friday 15th December 2017 at 3:15pm. family flowers only please by request, but donations if so desired for Queenscourt Hospice. Donations and further enquiries please to Sally Hunter MLS Independent Funeral Directors, 20 Moss Delph Lane, Aughton Tele: 01695 424888

HASTIE CATHERINE

Passed away peacefully at home on 8th December 2017
Aged 70 years
of Mawdesley

For Funeral times and all enquiries please contact Lisa Hunter MLS Independent Funeral Directors, 22a, Liverpool Road North, Burscough. Tele: 01704 891555

THORBURN MARGARET ROSE (NEE WOODWARD)

5th December 2017.
Passed away peacefully, reunited with John

Will be sadly missed by all the family. Funeral Service and Interment at Ormskirk Parish Church on Monday 18th December at 12.00noon. Family flowers only please, but donations if so desired for the Alzheimer's Society and Dementia UK. Donations and further enquiries please to Sally Hunter MLS Independent Funeral Directors, 20 Moss Delph Lane, Aughton, Ormskirk. Tel 01695 424888.

DEATHS

HOLLINSHEAD ERIC JOSEPH

6th December 2017
Aged 89 years.

Tears in my eyes will wipe away, but the love in my heart is there to stay. Dearly loved Husband of Iris. Will be sadly missed by family and friends. Funeral Service and Committal at Southport Crematorium on Monday 18th December 2017 at 10.40am. Family flowers only, donations if desired to Alzheimers Society c/o and all enquiries to Coyne Bros, 3 Old Mill Lane, Formby L37 3PE. Tel. 01704 873899

GITTINS JOSEPH (JOE)

4th December 2017
Peacefully in hospital, aged 89 years

Much loved Husband of Sheila, loving Father of Christine, Pauline and Joseph. Very proud Grandad of Julia, Hannah and Logan. Joe will be sadly missed by all his family and friends. Requiem Mass at St Helens Church, Crosby on Friday 15th December 2017 at 11am followed by Interment at Thornton Garden of Rest. No flowers please, donations if desired to Pancreatic Cancer c/o H.Leslie Humphreys, 69 Liverpool Road, Crosby L23 5SE. Tel 0151 9244805.

CORK SUSAN WENDY

December 7th 2017
Aged 72 years
Peacefully at home surrounded by her loved ones.

Devoted Wife, Mother, Daughter, Sister and Grandmother. Funeral to be held at St Peters Church Formby on Friday December 15th 2017 at 3pm. Family flowers only please but if desired donations to Queenscourt Hospice or Cancer Research UK c/o H. Leslie Humphreys 69 Liverpool Road, Crosby L23 7TP. 0151 924 4805.

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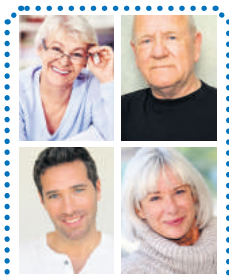

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MOBILITY

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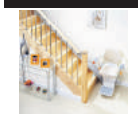

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For more information, please contact Nicola Hanna, Head of Income Generation on **01704 517420**. To apply for one of our vacancies please go to www.queenscourt.org.uk/jobs and complete a job application form. You will also find copies of the Job Description and Person Specification for both jobs.

Closing date for receipt of applications: Midnight, Thursday 21st December 2017

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PUBLIC NOTICES

GRAHAM GIBSON MILLER
(Deceased)

Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the above named, late of Flat 3 Warrenhouse Court, 17 Warrenhouse Road, Brighton-Le-Sands, Merseyside L22 6QN, who died on 16/06/2017, are required to send written particulars thereof to the undersigned on or before 14/02/2018, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

Chorus Law Limited acting for the Personal Representative,
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Department for Transport

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

The Secretary of State gives notice of an Order made under Section 247 of the above Act entitled "The Stopping up of Highway (North West) (No. 80) Order 2017" authorising the stopping up of two lengths of footway at Beechtrees at Skelmersdale in the Borough of West Lancashire, to enable development as permitted by West Lancashire District Council, reference 2017/0298/PND.

Copies of the Order may be obtained, free of charge, from the Secretary of State, National Transport Casework Team, Tyneside House, Skinnerburn Road, Newcastle Business Park, Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 7AR or nationalcasework@dft.gsi.gov.uk (quoting NATTRAN/NW/S247/2789) and may be inspected during normal opening hours at West Lancashire Borough Council, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk, Lancashire L39 2DF.

Any person aggrieved by or desiring to question the validity of or any provision within the Order, on the grounds that it is not within the powers of the above Act or that any requirement or regulation made has not been complied with, may, within 6 weeks of 13 December 2017 apply to the High Court for the suspension or quashing of the Order or of any provision included.

G Patrick, Casework Manager

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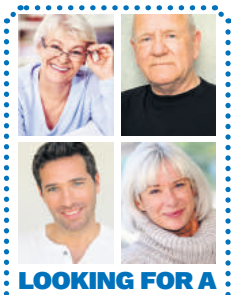

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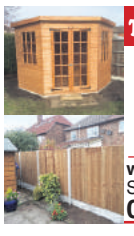

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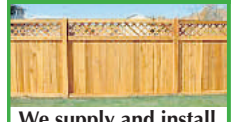

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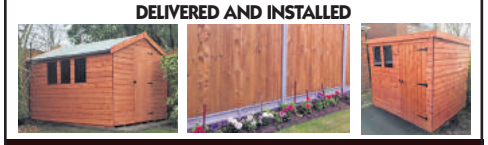

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It normally happens to me somewhere between Wham! and Shakin' Stevens...

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IT NORMALLY happens somewhere between Wham! and Shakin' Stevens at the office Christmas do. It's way past your bedtime, you've visited the free bar once too many, and you're about to regale your boss with that story about how you snuck into the stationary cupboard and did something that'd land you with a police caution anywhere else. In other words, it's time to fall into a taxi for the ride home.

But it's almost certain – unless you've got an employer generous enough to whisk you down to the capital for your night out – that it won't be the new TX black cab. It's a lot smoother and quieter than the old TX4 taxi it's replacing, and there's fancy Volvo-sourced switchgear to enjoy, but it's unlikely to make it anywhere north of the M25 for at least another six months. It's also unlikely to win many taxi-driving friends up here for the same reason most of us think a three-bed house in London is a stupid idea; it costs an eyewatering amount of money.

£55,000, to be exact. To be fair the new taxi does come with some sophisticated electric motors and a Volvo engine as a range extender, none of which comes cheap, but it's hard to imagine the fine taxi-faring folk of the North West forking out the price of a Range Rover Velar for something to replace their 08-reg Ford Focus Estate.

Happily, there is an alternative. If you really do want to do the falling into the back of a taxi while slightly hammered after a Christmas party thing properly – and there'll be opportunities aplenty over the next few weeks – why not persuade a mate to buy the outgoing London Taxi for a laugh?

They are, as it turns out, ridiculously cheap if you know where to look. Go hunting for one – and it doesn't really matter if it's the original TX1 or the much later TX4, because if you're a festive and mildly sloshed partygoer they'll feel exactly the same – and prices start from just £800 for something a bit battered, and from nearer £1500 for one with some life left in it. And – as *Top Gear* viewers might remember from an episode earlier this year – these things can hack just about anything.

If you need a roomy diesel chariot and you can't bear the thought of buying a Renault Scenic or Ford C-Max then an old black cab is a much quirkier alternative. You'll be the envy of your mates too; drive into town to pick them up from their Christmas party on a Friday night and they'll love you forever.

You could even charge 'em a few quid for the privilege. That might catch on…

David Simister is the editor of Classic Car Weekly

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58 VW FOX 3DR, in blue, 69,000 miles £2250
55 VOLVO V50 DIESEL ESTATE, grey metallic, full leather £1995
56 CITROEN C1 1.0 VIBE, black, 48,000 miles £1995
56 PEUGEOT 107 1.0, black £1995
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Burscough defenders try to win the ball back from Northwich. Picture by Marc Taylor

Cummings strikes in injury time to hand Linnets three points

Burscough 2
Northwich Victoria 1

A LAST gasp winner from Terry Cummings gave Linnets supporters an early Christmas present after a thrilling second half, *writes Neil Leatherbarrow.*

An exciting second period saw Burscough miss a penalty and take the lead with a fine strike, before Northwich levelled.

Thankfully the home side got a winner deep into injury time with an incisive counterattack goal seconds from the final whistle.

The first-half was a tight affair with midfielders both dominating and smothering each other's best efforts.

In the 19th minute, Cummings got free down the right and crossed to the penalty spot. After a dummy that sold the Vics defence, Maddocks hit a scorching shot that brought a top class reaction save.

Burscough probably had marginally more of the possession for the rest of the half, but apart from a ball across the face of goal there wasn't too much to warm anyone up as defences dominated.

The game livened up in the 51st minute. Cummings carried the ball down the right and was in the far corner of the Northwich penalty area when he was the victim of what is best described as a badly timed tackle by Vic's Kieron Kenny.

A penalty was given. Chad Whyte took on the responsibility and his shot to the keeper's right was superbly punched away by the keeper.

For a few minutes the penalty save motivated the visitors and Matthews put a shot wide and Samberg saved from Oliver Walker's low shot.

Just after the hour mark Burscough took the lead. Ward hit a shot from around 18 yards and it beat the keeper at his left-hand post to make it 1-0.

Northwich reacted strongly and Jason Hart was just about to enter the Burscough penalty area in the 68th minute when he was dragged back by Linnets substitute Michael Samson.

From the kick Hart pulled his shot wide of the near-post. In the 75th minute Northwich did equalise and it was without doubt the goal of the game.

Vic's were awarded a free-kick on the right-hand side about 30 yards out, which Burscough' 's Alex Parkes disputed vigorously. Rory Gorman sent a powerfully struck swerving left-foot free-kick under the Linnets crossbar and into the net.

Although the game then became stretched defences were still on top until the game entered added time.

Four minutes had elapsed when Burscough cleared another corner and this time Ward took the ball down the pitch for about 40 yards then swung out to Gilchrist on the right.

He then sent the ball to Cummings inside the penalty area. The general consensus was that Cummings should have hit his goal attempt first time as a defender closed him down, but instead he sidestepped the challenge and keeping a remarkably cool head to put a shot low into the net from around 15 yards for the Burscough winner.

Skem set for return to action

SKELMERSDALE will return to action this Saturday, with Burscough playing at home for the third weekend running.

Skelmersdale make the trip to Urmston where they take on Trafford, while Burscough are at home to neighbours of Skem's opponents West Didsbury & Chorlton.

After Colwyn Bay curtailed Skelmersdale's unbeaten run at six a couple of weeks ago Dave Powell's side will be looking to bounce back quickly and they may have just the chance too after Trafford suffered a 6-1 hammering at Hyde United on one of the few games played last Saturday.

We understand Dave Powell has made one high profile change to his squad last week as Steve Gillespie has ended his contract by mutual consent.

Steve is 32 years old and has been struggling to get over a hamstring injury since August.

From a more positive perspective, Skem's squad has been boosted due to the return of a few players after injury.

Saturday, December 23 sees Skelmersdale entertain Brighouse Town before they face a local derby at Bamber Bridge on Boxing Day.

Burscough have been busy at Victoria Park, drawing with highly placed Charnock Richard before defeating Northwich Victoria last week.

Saturday's opponents will be making a first ever trip to Burscough for what could a crucial game come the end of the season.

Potentially three points could move them up to 15th or 16th position and significantly above West Didsbury & Chorlton, so there is plenty at stake.

On Saturday, December 23 they are away to AFC Liverpool at Marine FC's ground.

On Boxing Day, Burscough are at home to Squires Gate.

Boxer hoping to make it five wins in a row

SKELMERSDALE light welterweight boxer Colin Day is hoping to make it five professional fight wins in a row when he faces Scott Moises at the Robin Park arena, in Wigan, this Saturday (December 16).

Colin has been very active since turning pro and notched up his fourth win on Saturday, November 4 at the BT Convention Centre in Liverpool City Centre.

He was expecting that fight to be his last appearance until after Christmas.

Colin said: "It has all been going well this year. I have been in the gym for about the last 15 weeks.

"All my family will be there on Saturday. There will also be people from Birch Green Boxing Club attending as I am a coach there."

Colin with head coach Rob Butler and dad, Colin Day snr

Out of Colin's four professional fights, three have come by points and one by knock out.

Colin's head coach Rob Butler said: "Colin is a joy to work with, he's very professional. We have had a good camp, we're always working really to be honest."

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